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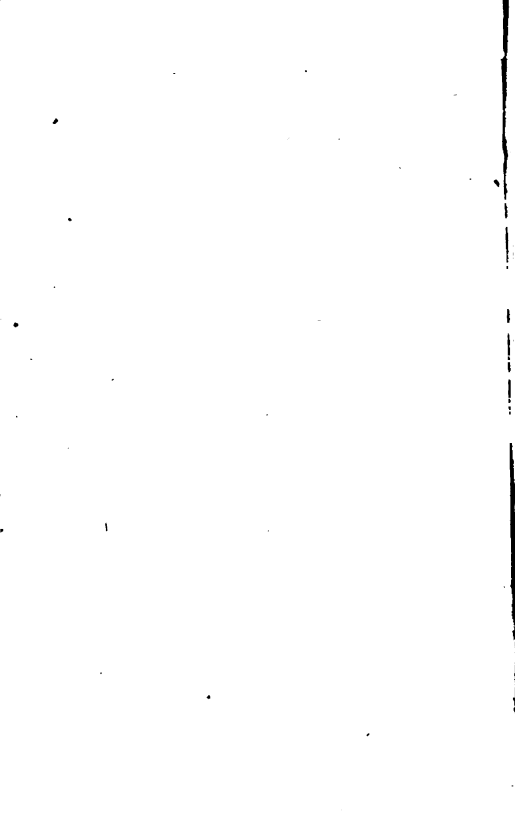
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THE  
SACRED FLORA:  
OR  
FLOWERS FROM THE GRAVE  
OF A CHILD.

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BY HENRY BACON.

---

"A book upon whose leaves some chosen plants,  
By his own hand disposed with nicest care,  
In undecaying beauty were preserved;  
Mute register, to him, of time and place,  
And various fluctuations in the breast;  
To her, a monument of faithful love."

*Wordsworth.*

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BOSTON:  
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1845.

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*Henry F. Harrington*

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### INSCRIPTION.

To *her* whose "FLORA" first suggested this work, and who has fulfilled the mission of Love in joy and in sorrow, this little volume is affectionately inscribed, with the prayer that mutual sympathy may ever lighten earth's unavoidable trials and sorrows, till the golden circlet, with all its jewels, shall be complete in Heaven.





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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE name of "*Flora*" has been given to little volumes in which culled flowers have been pressed, as memorials of persons, times, and scenes, connected with incidents in the life of the owner of the book; and sentiments, corresponding with the poetic language of the flowers, are recorded beneath or around them. The author of the little book here presented to the reader, has selected the name of "*Sacred Flora*," because the sentiments he wished to express, springing as they did around the grave of a precious child, seemed to him well symbolized by such memorial flowers as those to which allusion has been made; and he trusts, that thus gathered, they will be found truly the flowers of Christian thought and sentiment. In preparing a memorial of an angel spirit, whose life on earth was that of a spring-flower—sweetness and beauty, he would fain believe that he has done a work for other hearts as well as for his own. He would console the bereaved, and furnish preparatives against

the trial hour to those who have not as yet seen the dark wing of Death shadowing the brightness of home :

“ Words of heartfelt truth,  
Tending to patience when Affliction strikes ;  
To hope and love ; to confident repose  
In God ; and reverence for the dust of man.”

He has “ looked into his heart and written.” He has loved to write, because of the serenity which passed upon his spirit from the truths thus evolved ; and why should he not hope that *the speech of his own experience* may soothe other mourning spirits, by leading them to the highest and purest sources of consolation through the assurance and endurance of Faith ? He would throw around children—the present, as well as the absent—a Christian interest ; and if this work shall be successful in doing this, the great desire of his heart will be answered. He would hope that this volume might be a book for the affections ; a manual for solitude ; a friend whose words shall speak peace to the troubled elements of grief, when the memories of the past rush with violence over the soul, and the vacancies of the present are deeply felt. If so, it will do good to many a parent ; it will be welcome in many a home ; it will bring Jesus to the weeping Rachels.

This work would not have been put to press had not the author been assured that the Religion of Jesus has bestowed upon him a gift to be a consoler. The records of his ministry, kept by memory, afford him many precious evidences that this is his

vocation; and the success attending the publication of a former work,—“*The Christian Comforter*,”—verifies this belief. He was lately informed of a young lady in a neighboring city, long sick as a victim of consumption, to whom that work was so dear, that she enjoined upon her mother to permit it to be with her in the coffin; and it was so committed to the grave—a token of the spirit’s love of the consolations of Christ. As dear, the author humbly trusts, this little *Sacred Flora* will be to many a parent, by the side of the early dead, or when, in meditative moments, the grave yields the beloved only to the eye of the imagination, or of faith. In this trust he has written, now publishes, and commits his work to its destiny.

In the following pages he has not dwelt on those things which make the eye weep tears like rain, without waking into action one principle of abiding strength. He has reverently imitated the prophets of old, who searched not only to discern “the sufferings of Christ,” and wept, but also “the glory that should follow,” and rejoiced. He has continually kept in sight “the Shadow of a Great Rock in a weary land,” while he has spoken of the sad pilgrimage which bereaved love must make. And written so clearly on his heart have been those words of God, by his prophet, that he has never lost sight of them,—“As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.” The true mother not only seeks to wipe away tears of sorrow, or to blend the elements of hope with them that

they may not fall so bitterly, but she also strives to arouse to daily duties and deeds of faithfulness to nature's high ministries. Thus comforted, the heart becomes regenerated, and less repressed are

"Those gentle charities which draw  
Man closer with his kind—  
Those sweet humanities which make  
The music which they find.

How many a bitter weed 't would hush—  
How many a pang 't would save,  
*If life more precious made those ties  
Which sanctify the grave !*"

H. B.

PROVIDENCE, R. I.



## FLOWERS.

"Hail! image of primeval time!  
Hail! sample of a world to come!"  
*Langhorne.*

THE human heart will never speak its last word about flowers. They hold a high rank among material things as ministers of the tenderest truths and holiest hopes. They look up to the sun, as the soul looks up to God, everywhere; and not in vain do they greet the eye of man, civilized or savage, the dweller in the city, or the wanderer over deserts and mountains. They do not need a language, for they are a language in themselves, and have ever been quoted to adorn the literature of all times and people. The happiest and the saddest seasons in social and domestic existence have received a chastening or heightening influence from their presence. They bloom on the glowing brow and the heaving bosom of the bride; they bless the sick-chamber, like beautiful stars

gleaming through gloom ; and the chaplet for the dead must be gemmed with floral jewels, or it were too sad for the heart that must hope or break. Buds in the hands of the early dead, are "sweets to the sweet," types of happiness that has been, and of blessedness that shall be. They must spring from the grave to smile away the tear that grows too bitter in the eye ; and the heart feels that something holy is folded to it when a flower plucked from that sacred spot is pressed to the affections. And like a dream of heaven, too bright to be deemed all a mere vision of the night, become the sentiments which are pleasant to the soul, suggested by the azure blossom of the myrtle as it twines around the memorial stone, or the bright pansies that spread abroad, as if eager to make the spot attractive, to win the lingerer yet longer to tarry there, and learn to estimate more justly the pursuits of life and the promises of immortality.

It is no marvel that the ancients deemed flowers fit ornaments for the gods themselves, and strewed them upon the altars in acknowledgment of the smiles of love that awoke

them into being. The priestesses of Isis, the swift and golden-winged messenger of the gods, "veiled their altars with the shade of flowers," and by the fragrant lotus added beauty to the stately columns of the temple; passing behind the same veil of loveliness and sweetness, are messengers of heaven, ready to speak to us with a holier eloquence than was ever given to him that wore the lotus crown. To listen to the gentle whisperings that come from the voices that speak within the flower-veil, Jesus has invited us. It is wisdom to consider that to which he has directed attention; and we may innocently admire that to which more glory is given than Solomon wore in his royalty. Surely, if the flowers were pointed to as teachers of our heavenly Father's providence, they ought to be loved,—they ought to gem the grave,—they are scriptures to be searched, and their beautiful leaves should be opened when the tomb is unbarred, and when the faded form is hidden from our sight. What do we need more than a loving trust in God's providence? What can come to us with more balmy power, to heal the wounds which death has



made? What can make us realize that the human flowers which brightened our field and won us from care and sorrow, bloom still in the world where blight cannot touch a petal, or darken a brilliant hue? Oh, it was a divine thought when Jesus pointed to the flowers as teachers of Providence; for on the desert sands they have with "airy tongues syllabled God's name," and smiled away the traveller's despair; on the dark mountains they have gleamed up from the chasm in the rocks to inspire new strength.

Man plucked flowers with a different heart after Christ had spoken those few words, like the words that made "the bow in the clouds" a token of God's presence and love. They became "relics of Eden" indeed, and spake of a purity that could be preserved amid a world of corruption, and that the humblest form of life may be beautiful. When the martyr fell amid the fury of heathen wrath, seemingly forsaken of God, the early Christians bore him to the grave with hymns of praise blending with the breath of gathered flowers; that spake of a Providence that did not permit for nought the plucking of a single

bud. And if with Christ's hand we could cull the beauties of the wild, looking as he looked on floral loveliness, what richness of hope and trust should we gather with the flowers! How much wiser should we gaze on the seeming disturbance of nature's harmonies in the blighting of the rose and the early perishing of the blossom and bud of beauty! How much calmer would be the feelings with which we should weave the fragrant wreath for the name of the early dead, mingling therewith the unseen and mystic flowers of sentiment, from

"The cool grottoes of the soul,  
Whence flows thought's crystal river."

All beauty speaks of heaven and of that which brings the sweetest comfort, only as it is looked upon with the eye of Jesus. None can give us such an invitation as he continues to give, to "consider the flowers;" for not until he came did a messenger of God take a child to his arms, and pronounce with the lips of prayer, that "of such is the kingdom of heaven." He first made the infant soul to be discerned as the offspring of God, and

with its little form united the greatest truths. His wisdom did not require that he should speak of lofty things to give sublimity to his teachings, as illustrations of the truths he taught, for the greatness of his soul is seen in the grand ideas which he associated with simple things. He knew that if man would but think rightly of the infant soul and the blooming flower, he would keep alive that tenderness of feeling which is essential to a correct reception of an affectionate religion. Not by what they have done, but by what they are, are souls made precious in the sight of heaven; and the little child that early passes from our mortal vision, thus becomes a token of the beauty that blooms in Paradise:

“The future brightens on our sight;  
For on the past hath fallen a light  
That tempts us to adore.”

Shall we not then make for our comfort a *Sacred Flora*, in which the eye can gaze upon the memorials of the pilgrimages which affection makes among the homes of the dead, and which shall speak of strengthened hope and a more cheerful faith? There are

flowers on the grave for us to consider. Not in vain shall the thoughtful soul gaze upon them with moistened eye. Unseen angels shall scatter around us even more beautiful tokens of love than those fruits and flowers

“With which of old the magi fed  
The wandering spirits of their dead.”

We need to place ourselves in the way of such angels and plead for their ministries; for the grave is too sad for us, and we are wanting in much of that wisdom which makes the clods of the valley sweet unto the sleeper. We weep as though we had indeed laid the all we loved in the bosom of the earth, rather than the vesture of the spirit; and the grandest of all truths—the idea of Immortality—seems to be too great to be received into such humble habitations as our impure hearts. Yet—O matchless condescension!—if we will but open the gates of the soul, “the King of glory” will “come in!” His eye shall rest on many a thought, and it shall be cherished as a token-flower—a memorial that shall never lose its hallowed associations. At the grave of the precious

one, we shall learn the secret how "to suffer and be strong;" and the thoughts that sway us shall speak of "submission," like the grass that waves over our beautiful dead. This shall be our experience as we become the disciples of Him who is "the Resurrection and the Life," and are able to say in all the fervency with which it came from the Harp of the Affections,—

"By the holy instinct of my heart,  
By the hope that bears me on,  
I have still my own undying part  
In the deep affection gone!"

A child's grave! oh, indeed, it is a holy spot, for though we have spoken the sad words "dust unto dust," yet there lies the form we have so fondly embraced; there is the only medium through which we have known the mysterious soul, the pure and sweet affections of our treasure; and we cannot but feel that something sacred yet lingers there, ready to charm us into submission. Often shall our pilgrim feet be turned thitherward, and from trees of life we will pluck fruits of love, as we garner in our bosom the precious flowers of truth.

## THE FLOWERS.

As angels sport amid the stars,  
And crown their brows with light,  
She played amid the flowers of spring,  
A creature of delight.

But when her heart was leaping most  
To greet the summer bloom,  
The spectre of the paling cheek,  
Led to the darkened room.

But there, as when the smiles of Christ  
Broke through the veil of death,  
The flowers were seen in morning bloom,  
And balmy was their breath.

She gazed upon them long and still,  
As though she read the truth,  
That like them she must fade and die,  
Before the noon of youth.

Yet did they give her holy thoughts,  
And she would bid us smile,  
As though the flower-wreathed chain of hope  
She sported with the while.

Still bloom, sweet flowers, for her dear sake ;  
I love ye all the more

That she has winged her mystic flight  
To heaven's eternal shore.

I love to greet ye in my walks;  
Your beauty is her own;  
The birds above ye by the brook,  
Sing with her merry tone.

And while I breathe the fragrant air,  
And see the stream run on,  
I think upon a holy soul,  
As glory early gone!

Still bloom, sweet flowers! I love to gaze  
On what she loved so well;  
Beyond the charm of stars or skies,  
Ye have o'er me a spell.

And I would feel that holy spell  
When on the couch I lay,  
From whence to greet thee, *Immortelle!*  
My spirit flees away.



## THE PAST.

No living blossoms are more dear  
Than these dead relics treasured here :  
O flowers of grace, I bless ye all,  
By the dear faces ye recall !

*Lowell.*

HERE is a *Flora* by my side—a book-casket of flower-gems, collected by the hand of affection, and with each is linked some happy memories. If poetry is the “happiest record of the heart’s happiest hours,” then this little volume is full of poetry. Every leaf contains a poem which appeals directly to the affections, and brings to the imagination the sweetest of all pictures. The joy of the past returns in all its freshness ; indeed, the beauty of some scenes is enhanced, as it is just as true of the past as of the future, that “distance lends enchantment to the view.” The past of our childhood is thus made very beautiful, and we linger over its mementos with a delight for which we can find no adequate language. And it is so with the *Flora*



now before me. Here are slight outlines of walks and rambles through lone paths and tangled bye-places, in the forest and on the hills, by the brookside and the lake; and happy, though sometimes mournful and solemn thoughts from conversations with the beloved. The beloved, *all* of whom are not now with the living of earth, but some of whom are, as we trust and believe, with the white-robed immortals in the paradise of God. How delightful it is thus to preserve the golden links of memory's chain, and keep the dust from them, that we may yield ourselves to its strong attraction and be drawn back to mingle again with those who made life a glad thing—to hear their voices, and let our hearts beat to the cadence of their song! We are thus made to feel our identity—that we have lost nothing amid the waste and changes of years—that in the halls of the soul, all the portraits that have been hung there are unfaded, and need but a breath of memory to remove the dimming dust of time. The mysterious unions thus preserved, we *feel* will be continued; that through the vast future that spreads out before us, the heart

will lose none of its loves, but ever claim its own.

We call the past "inexorable"—we cry in agony that it will not give back our beloved, and we pour out our best strength in the tears of vain regret—regret that takes its very bitterness from the fact that it is *vain!* But is it so? Will not the past unbolt his massive doors and permit the vast procession that have entered to return? Can their faces never be turned towards us again? Have we looked our last on them? No: the past is not the monster we describe him. He does not hide our love behind heaven-high gates and impenetrable veils or shrouds. He is willing that all which obstructs our sight should become transparent as ether. And is not this done in the hours when the Dreamer anoints our sight and we live a year in a moment? That angel can be inclined to favor us more than he does, if we will merit his favors. To the lone and abject prisoner in the dark dungeon he has been and sleep was made the most real life. The gladdened and refreshed spirit courted his kindness, and for long months night was

home and union with the precious ones of the heart. He was unjustly in prison; the shadow of guilt was not upon his soul; and the past was his friend. When the gloom of the hours of darkness was abroad, and the stars, that the prisoner could not see, were piercing the sombre veil in mercy to man, the past lit other lights in the dungeon—lights like the mystic lamp of old that burned in brightness amid the damps of the tomb. And the Past will favor us, if we do not ask too much; and our chief folly in life is asking too much, and not enjoying what is given. We cannot have the departed as we once had them; and should we ask to thus have them? Is our love so selfish that we wish them to return to mortality? Not that I would depreciate the blessings of earthly life, and neither would I depreciate its sorrows. But can we not make ourselves willing to enjoy them as is our privilege—to let them speak “with lips of air,” if they cannot with lips of flesh—to let them smile as the sunset lies on a snowy cloud, if they cannot with pulsating cheek—and let them stand before us in phantom form, if they cannot in the

substantial attributes of flesh? Indeed, this is the only way in which we have ever had them; for the lips we saluted yesterday, are not worn by the living now; the cheek that threw out the radiance of soul then, is not the surface on which the sunlight of warm sympathy now dances; and the form we embrace with ecstasy, has changed since last we clasped it. But the affections live on from day to day, from year to year, and O blessed God! from age to age! On the wings of the perishing flesh that passed away by the law of exhaustion, and on the breath which the heaving lungs exhaled, the soul did not pass. By the processes of the natural laws, the body arrives at its full growth, and who by "taking thought"—by anxiety, can add the least unto his stature? But not so with the mind. By the very process, according to the spiritual laws, whereby the soul grows, it adds to its power of increasing more—on, on, in endless progression. By thought we can add till we come "to the fulness of the stature of the perfect man in Christ Jesus." *That* perfection will be like the ever-enlarging and beautifying

ideal of the sculptor, who exclaimed, "Time is too short—I must be immortal!" On mind we need to fix our love, and then the past will give back our precious ones. We shall not plead in vain. The future of reunion shall be now. It will be now, if we have the Christian's faith in immortality.

"Yes! in our hearts the lost we mourn remain,  
Objects of love and ever fresh delight;  
And fancy leads them in her fairy train  
In half seen transports past the mourner's sight.

"Yes! in ten thousand ways, or far or near,  
The called by love, by meditation brought,  
In heavenly visions yet they haunt us here,  
The sad companions of our sweetest thought."

Dear, then, shall be the *Flora*—sweet friend of memory. Memory, not like the "tomb-searcher," lifting the shrouds from the buried dead, but like some sweet angel that bears us to our home when we are in solitude, and unites us with our kindred, turning our tears into the rainbow that follows the storm. Yes, the past is ours! The first flower we press is love unchanged by death.

## MEMORY'S AIDS.

More goldenly the stars have shone  
Since on thy grave, my child,  
I plucked the yellow clover there,  
So beautiful, though wild.

I ne'er shall see a golden flower,  
But in my heart will spring  
A thought on which my grateful soul  
To heaven and thee shall wing.

I went again: the clover white  
Bloomed where we laid thee, dear!  
Then in sweet vision I beheld  
The white-robed seraph's sphere.

And ne'er shall bloom a snowy flower  
Beneath my roaming eye,  
That will not bear my soul away  
To meet thee in the sky.

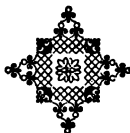
With every fibre of my heart,  
And knit with every thought,  
Thy precious memory is twined,  
So well love's charm was wrought.

I would not bid one flower to fade,  
One tiny thing depart,  
By which thy memory returns  
To overflow the heart.

I cannot see thy face too oft,  
For angels always bless !  
I need thy pure and heavenly smile,  
Thy soft and strong caress.

The memories which I keep so bright  
Are yearning chains to me,  
That draw my spirit to thy home,  
Thy blessedness to see.

For oh, the parents' heart can bear  
Sorrow and pain and thrall,  
Far better when the truth is felt  
"Thy child is free from all !"



## THE FUTURE.

God hath purified my spirit's eye,  
And in the folds of this consummate rose  
I read bright prophecies. I see not there,  
Dimly and mournfully, the word "farewell"  
On the rich petals traced : no—in soft veins  
And characters of beauty, I can read—  
"Look up—look heavenward."

*Mrs. Hemans.*

IN the *Flora* which is before me, though the associations connected with each flower are perfect, yet almost every gem has lost its brightness. Many of the colors have faded, or completely changed, and only the blue—the Scripture color for *Perfection*—is still fair. The violet—emblem of *Faithfulness*—is the most perfect. But in the *Sacred Flora*, where thoughts are flowers, where memory is the keeper, and affection is the poetess—all the gems are of unfading brightness, and shine as beautifully as did the precious stones in the High Priest's breastplate. We can breathe upon the pressed flowers



there, and they will not refuse to smile, or to scent the air with fragrance. They are embalmed as no Egyptian ever yet embalmed his dead, and we can have a clearer hope of their resurrection than he had of the reanimation of the cold clay after a thousand years. We speak, and lo! thoughts culled in years gone by, bloom again, as the fairy made the desert to be jewelled with roses. And this truth should be precious, if amid these flowers the Rose of Sharon smiles. Then can we truly say, "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts delight my soul;"—yes, delight us, as the violet throws its beauty over the other flowers, and whispers of faithfulness.

We speak of the passing away of everything, and say that there is nothing enduring. We feel so. The solid earth seems to reel in its orbit, and to "ring hollow from below" with ominous sounds. Nothing is certain, now that the reality of death has been felt. When we stood over the dead, we almost felt like never hoping again! Yet, "we are saved by hope"—saved from despair, from arraigning our Father's wisdom

and goodness, and from making one grave the burial place of all beauty and joy. Yes, hope is enduring, and the moral of the ancient fable was good and truthful, where, when all the angels had forsaken the earth, benignant and ever cheerful hope remained as man's steadfast friend. Hope is an instinct of the soul; it belongs to our essential and ever-continuing being. We were "made subject to vanity *in hope*," and we do wrong to say that it will ever die. Its objects may change, but the attributes of hope are immortal. We say hope "will end in fruition," but we can mean to say that it will end only so far as the present objects of hope are concerned. There will always be a field for hope to roam in, for an immortal instinct contains its own proof of immortal satisfaction. Hope is then to be placed among permanent things. It belongs no less to the angel than to the man. We shall be "equal to the angels," when we have only an angel's hopes. The cherubim, we are told, are the angels that know the most, and the seraphim those that love the most, yet both hope for more—more wisdom, more love. As they were represented in the

temple as bowing over the ark of sacred treasures with searching eyes, so is the reality in heaven. "Bless the Lord, ye his angels that excel in strength, that do his commandments, *hearkening* unto the voice of his word." There is always hope where the spirit intently listens; and the angels listen, for the messages of God to man are ever various—they come to all conditions and to all ages—they meet every want of the growing soul. "Blessed is he that hungereth and thirsteth after righteousness;" not because hunger and thirst impart happiness, but because the hungry and thirsty shall be filled. The angels of truth are ever ready to impart "the bread of God," and "the water of life."

The past is permanent—the good more than the evil. Nay, the evil is all perishable, and the good eternal. As we stand over the graves of the departed, we dwell only on what was good in them, and in the processes of time the evil vanishes. This is a type of "the fashion of this world that passeth away" in a thousand forms. The philosopher has pondered for years a stern problem; through

the long, lonely night he has pursued the thought which he believed and hoped his devotion would bring to him. His brain has ached in very agony, and his heart has beaten with strange and warning pulsations. On, on he has pursued his labors, till the stars burned dim in the sky and the sounds of the waking world have disturbed his silence. And so with the poet, the artist, the mechanic. So with the divine, the reformer, the scholar. But when the hour has come that makes the labored thought stand before them in living beauty, the pangs of labor pass into the unknown, but the thought belongs to the immortal. So when "a manifestation of the sons of God" shall be made, "the whole creation that groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now,"—and will thus groan and labor till the birth of the immortal and heavenly appears,—will forget all the sorrow in the gladness. Beautiful ordination of God! Rich compensation for sufferers! How beautifully it prophesies of the future!

This ordination is to be classed by us among that which is really permanent. No suffering, no trial should be permitted to

steal it from us. No uncertainties should weaken our confidence in this certainty. It should be among the first flowers pressed in our Sacred Flora. And around it we may place the truthful words of one, the good of whose genius must not be permitted to be buried with the evil :

“ God Almighty !  
There is a soul of good in things evil,  
Would men observingly distil it out.”

*Observingly !* that is the word to pause upon, for the soul of everything is hidden from the unobserving eye. “The kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation ; neither shall they say, lo here ! and lo there ! for the kingdom of God is within you.” We are not to behold it by getting upon “an exceeding high mountain,” as though it were a score-mile pageantry. No, but by cultivating the moral affections and taking care of the deep hidden soul of things. Then shall we read the language of the second flower in our Sacred Flora, as culled from the grave of a child. It shall bid us wait for the appearing good.

## INFLUENCE OF NATURE.

A THOUSAND lights are kindling there  
Where night her cypress sceptre sways,  
And every form of earth grows fair  
While smiling 'neath her sparkling rays.

But in my soul are kindling now  
Far lovelier than the fires of night,  
And on thought's sweet celestial brow  
Shines a rich crown of starry light.

The gloom departs that wrapt my soul ;  
I yield the cypress for the palm ;  
While streams of music o'er me roll,  
I drink from heavenly urns a balm.

How strange the power which nature holds,  
On the deep springs of feeling laid ;  
One smile unwraps the gloomy folds,  
And the last tear to grief is paid.

Go out, sad child of withering grief,  
Where the free air shall fan the brow,  
Give smothered thought some slight relief,  
And thou desponding will not bow.

## ASSOCIATION.

It may be a sound—  
A tone of music—summer's eve—or spring—  
A flower—the wind—the ocean—which shall  
wound,  
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are  
darkly bound.

*Byron.*

THE Flora which I keep near me is the handmaid of memory, and I often exclaim, How strange is the power of association! It gives to the most trivial thing an inestimable value. It is one of the most universal of all feelings, and hence that plaintive song, "Woodman! spare that tree!" has been rendered into almost every language where poetry is known. The tiniest toy may thus have something sacred to the mother's heart; and to yield the little robe she had fashioned for the darling, who so soon needed *another* and the last, would seem like sacrilege. This law of the affections—for it is a *law* and not a mere fitful feeling—we must honor.

We can have no Sacred Flora without it. It not only bids the flowers of thought bloom, but it presses and arranges them, and breathes a magic virtue into their hues and sweetness. We unconsciously yield to this law every day, and mysterious voices speak to us, and airy forms are in our sight. We enter, with a friend, into the jeweller's store : a rich array of glittering ornaments are spread before us, and the eye is delighted with the hues of the rainbow as seen in the precious stones encased in gold. To make a selection from all, if we were left perfectly to our own free choice, would be difficult ; but in a moment, when that friend takes from the case a golden ring, on which he has caused one word to be engraven, and circles the heart-finger with it,—all difficulty amid the conflicting choices of taste and fancy is ended. *Association* has done its work ; the diamond and the ruby, the emerald and the pearl, the richly chased and gem-inwrought circlet, will throw out their charms in vain. The plain gold ring, with that single word, is worth more than all. The heart has placed a value on it which it cannot place on any other.



That ring shall be golden indeed, for a golden thought has entered the precious metal; and as an affectionate thought gives a light to the human face, so that mental association seems to shine out in the peculiar brightness of the ring. But the word—that one word, which affection had engraven there!—*that* has also an association. It seems at first a word of mystery—“*Mizpah*”—but still it bespeaks something while it is a mystery. It tells of a mind active when the ring was first chosen by the giver, and the heart does not doubt but that it is a good word; it is willing to change Cowper’s words and prophecy—

“The bud may have a *foreign look*,  
But sweet will be the flower.”

The bud opens, and the flower blooms, as the word is explained,—“*Mizpah*; The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.” Gen. xxxi. 49. That Hebrew word signifying *Watch-tower*, shines as beautifully as the light of the beacon across the ocean waves. The seaman loves to gaze on the golden radiance thus thrown out upon the waters, flashing and

leaping with the billowy flow ; so to the eye of love is the light of those shining letters, which gleam on the watery eye in confused beams. The heart's blood pulsates against the ring, as the affections of the soul beat against the encircling thought.

How many things to a bereaved spirit are like that ring and that word ! " Striking the electric chain " not only to wound, but to bless. To the truly Christian spirit, there is no ring without a word—a word that lifts the soul to God, that speaks of his watchful care, and whispers of his love as the uniting cord between the mourning heart and the departed ! But where good thoughts are not entertained—where they visit not the heart, that soul is like the jeweller who engraved the sacred symbol on the ring we have mentioned. Their wandering and perplexed thoughts are the imaginings and unsatisfactory fancies which unenlightened reason must ever have, as it stands before the symbols of great truths, and cannot read any of the mysteries of the golden circle of divine providence. They have but one association with everything—their loss ! Not so with others.

There is indeed one association with everything, but always with it, in whatever shape it appears, there comes a band of sister angels that speak of the better world. As they muse on the departed—the departed to the eye of sense—their thoughts run in simple and plaintive rhyme,—

I think upon her life, to me  
A constant ray of joy,  
A fountain leaping in the light,  
My spirit's best employ,—  
A song at morn, a psalm at eve,  
A cooling shade at noon,—  
A glory when the stars were out,  
The beauty of the moon,—

The greenness of each growing thing,  
The sweetness of the rose,  
The radiance of the rising day,  
The beauty of its close,—  
The clearness of the running stream,  
The richness of the brook,  
The calmness of the forest walk,  
In *all* I greet her look!

There's not a step that e'er I take,  
There's not a motion made,  
But brings her in another shape—  
A sweet entrancing shade!

O could I bid her speak one word,  
One single music-note,  
Forever on the air I breathe  
The melody would float !

But never more that voice will speak—  
Her farewell song is sung,  
And all her holy melodies  
Now slumber on her tongue !  
No, no ! she sings them still to me,  
As now she sings in heaven !  
And ever from my spirit's calm  
The echo shall be given.

Sing on, sing on, my darling child !  
And when the eve shall come  
Intently I will list to hear  
The symphonies of home !  
Of home once here, but now afar—  
Nay, not afar to thought !  
And nightly will I own in prayer  
The change which thou hast wrought.

And what is that change ? The leaves of  
the Sacred Flora should tell of it—a change  
from happy to happier thought, as the tokens  
of the past which are in this precious volume  
at my side, speak of a multitude of scenes  
where love presided, assisted by Christian

sentiment. Every memory which brings to us the thought how we have been loved, should shed a sanctity upon the soul; and for the precious influence thus exerted, we should keep alive the associations which the life of the departed has connected with visible things :

“Blest that the things they loved on earth  
As relics we may hold,  
That wake sweet thoughts of parted worth  
By springs untold !”



## THE PHANTOM FORM.

I LOOK upon the playful group,  
Where sportive leap and whirling hoop  
Are symbols of the joy within,  
Unclouded by the mists of sin :  
And as I gaze, I see a form  
With all the sweet affections warm,  
And with a life all rife with words  
To stir the spirit's finer chords.

I spring to greet her—but, alas !  
Through the void air I swiftly pass,  
And find, too late to check my tears,  
My thought in phantom shape appears !  
And all I saw was but the thought  
That on the air its image wrought ;  
And ever thus my heart must be  
The sport of Fancy's mimicry !

But nay ; it shall not give me pain,  
For what I saw shall still remain ;  
And round my heart the smile will play,  
When phantom beauty flees away !  
And I will wait the dreamy hour,  
When bright again shall bloom the flower  
Whose beauty is a fairer sight  
Than comes with morn or evening light.

## FLOWERS ON THE GRAVE.

Aye, let them spring, as on the face  
Of the pale sleeper smiles appear ;  
The love that plucks them will replace,  
And give for dew, the tear.

A VISITOR to a burial place in Edinburgh, records that she was much affected by seeing a board on which was painted in bold characters—"Touch not the Flowers!" She was affected by the idea that such a caution, in such a place, should be needed ; and sad pictures of graves robbed of floral beauty, arose to her imagination. We marvel not at her feelings, and would that from the depths of the grave a voice might arise forbidding such sacrilege. I have spoken of "Flowers from a Child's Grave," on the title-page of this Flora, but let it not be imagined that I need to remember the plea just mentioned. It seems a wanton act of cruelty to pluck flowers from a child's grave—a place which

above all others ought to be permitted to retain whatever of brightness and loveliness may spring and blossom and bloom there, living the whole of its little day of beauty, and exhausting all its sweetness upon the sacred atmosphere. I love to look upon even the waving grass, and imagine that its movement is more graceful than upon upland or meadow, and that from its quivering spires comes a soft, melancholy, and yet sweet music. The thrilling song of the bird that strays there, seems softened and so varied that all the tones of the beloved and gone, again visit the ear. Far be it from me to cull flowers from a child's grave—to rob it of one form of beauty—to deprive it of one smile. The flowers which I would pluck from a child's grave are the flowers of thought and Christian sentiment, which leave the grave more beautiful than before they were culled. Strange is the power of thought! It sanctifies the dust, and from the depths of being arises a voice, This is hallowed ground! As thoughts spring up and bloom there, while sweetness enters the soul like the breath of the swinging censer min-



gling with the rising prayer in the temple, the grave becomes the very garden of God. In a beautiful sense, "The desert blossoms as a rose, and the wilderness is made glad for them: out of dry places waters spring, and the voice of the turtle is heard."

"And here the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

But the activity of thought will be according to the mixture of pure Christianity with its elements. Thought may—O, how often it does—have power to make a child's grave overwhelm the heart so that its strength may ooze out as from a wounded vine. A father was lately found dead on the grave of his two children whom he passionately loved. There were no flowers to breathe a sweetness upon the bitterness of his soul, and so he chose poison to end his mortal existence! He drank the liquid from the vial and dropped upon the children's grave. How different would it have been with him had he gone there like one of "the four and twenty elders that fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints!"

Again and again, a voice is heard, as in Rama of old, "lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and *will not* be comforted, because they are not." To such Rachels there are no flowers on the child's grave. They can have no Flora. All the sweet thoughts that come to them, are but spices to embalm *the dead*—spices prepared in the sorrowful home and borne to the grave, but alas! no *use* can be made of them! They need an angel's voice to speak to them—"Why seek ye the living among the dead?" *The living!* how it would startle them to hear such a word, as the women at Christ's sepulchre were startled! How like one breaking from a dream, while still the mystic chain is around him, would they gaze on every side, above and beneath. "O that we *could* seek our dead as the living! O that we might turn from the sad vision of the shroud, the pale cold face, the coffin, and the grave, and think of the precious one as among the living!" Such is the burden of the weeper who can pluck no flowers from her child's grave. She mourns over the body as though spirit and

flesh were one. She yet needs to hear the word whereby faith comes to the heart, and to its spiritualized vision,

"No longer the pall and the shroud wear gloom,  
They are travelling robes to a fairer home,  
Where hearts that were linked by an earthly love,  
Will meet to inherit a kingdom above."

But—sweet and beautiful flower for the Sacred Flora!—for every Rachel there is an angel of the Resurrection. If by humble submission to the mysteries of God, the heart will take hold of the revelations of his goodness, no more will the living be sought among the dead, but the mourner will think of them as among the celestials. Hope will gem the grave with the flowers of paradise, and tears, like the dews of morning, shall be exhaled in sweetness. Yes, the deep affections of our nature, that bleed so freely and with such painful gushings at times, can find a balm of healing. Into the bitter waters of which we *must* drink, the sacred branch may be thrown; and "blessed shall be they who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well." "He shall drink of the brook in the

way; therefore shall he lift up the head." The pilgrim of sorrow shall become like the reanimated traveller, who by the invigorating draught, lifts up his head in newness of strength and presses on in his journey. His journey, that lies between where his footsteps now tread and the "land he discerns afar off," as the journey of life lies between the grave of the beloved and the blest meeting again. Let us pluck a flower to place in the Sacred Flora that shall ever be with us to read when wearied we pause to rest. We shall not go, like Martha, "to the grave to weep there," but to visit the resting place of the form beloved, and mingle in our sorrows the odors of the flowers of hope.



## ROSE-BUDS IN HER HAND.

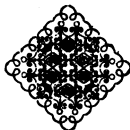
"How beautiful those rose-buds are!"  
The happy brother said,  
Whose hopeful heart could have no thought  
That sister could be *dead*;  
"I'll pluck them for sweet sister now,  
And take them where she lies,  
I know she'll love to see them there  
When open are her eyes."

He plucked them for his sister dear,  
And bore them to her hand,  
But to his trustful soul there came  
No dark and shadowy band,  
As to the eye so often comes  
Around the form of death,  
To bring but sorrow when at last  
Is breathed the parting breath.

O beautiful those buds appeared,  
Sweet types of childhood's trust,  
That opens only to give sweets  
To breathe o'er human dust!  
And from my fervent soul went up,  
"O Father! list to me!  
Let to his soul all thoughts of death  
Like those sweet rose-buds be!"

O let us with the youthful dead  
Unite the budding flowers,  
That while we weep the faded eye  
And love's entrancing flowers,—  
We on the beautiful may gaze  
Beyond the changes here,  
And let the smiles of angels play  
Through every falling tear :

Bright rainbow of the Christian's sky,  
That bends to hallow earth,  
And wake in storm-bowed souls again  
The music of its mirth,  
And give to thought a holy way  
To tread unto the skies,  
To see the joy of ransomed souls  
With hope-anointed eyes.



## IMMORTALITY.

"Now when the hour arrives  
From flesh that sets me free,  
Thy spirit may await,  
The first at heaven's gate,  
To meet and welcome me."

Yes, the flowers of hope should bloom on the grave, springing from the ashes of beauty. Immortality is our hope. It should have a prominent place, wreathed round with the laurel, in our Sacred Flora. It is "a great thought," but it bends, like "the mighty angel," all tenderly to take up the little child. It did thus bend when Jesus "took little children in his arms and blessed them;" for he said of himself, "I am the resurrection and the life!" And he also gave the caution, "Despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father"—they are messengers so highly honored, that at

any time they can enter the presence of Majesty, as favorites come into the audience chamber of an oriental monarch without delays.

And does not "the Lord of life and glory" still speak as on that day when Hebrew mothers pressed towards him with their children for his prayer and blessing, while his disciples forbade them? "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not!" *Suffer!* how well chosen the word to convey the tender idea! He did not utter an imperative command, but his tone was gentle and persuasive, as the voice should ever be where children are. "A soft answer turned away" the wrong temper of the disciples who "knew not what manner of spirit they were of;" and would he not by the same, turn away the grief, the murmuring, and the disquiet, that in many bereaved hearts take the same place which the disciples assumed? How many need to listen to it reverently as they stand over the grave of a child! Like Hagar in the wilderness, they cry, in agony, "Let me not see the death of the child!" while they can see nothing but its death.



Near them, as ready to send its gurgling sound to Hagar, a fountain gushes forth with inexhaustible flow. Drink, O ye bereaved ! and ye shall not so much see *the death* of the beloved, as *their immortality*. In the visions of faith, they shall appear more beautiful to the spiritual sight, than Ishmael when he stood up and twined his loving arms around his mother's neck ; when her prayer was answered and "her eyes were opened" to see the life-giving waters of which he drank.

I have drank. With the strength imparted by the continually refreshing draught, I go to the grave of my Mary, and there pluck flowers such as are woven into the garlands of angels—such as deck her own spiritual brow. The flowers there gathered retain their brightness and perfume, by the wondrous virtues of those same waters.

Virgil speaks of flowers on which the names of kings were written ; written how ? it may be by some mystical direction of art by photographic process. More clearly upon the flowers I gathered there, has the light of the Sun of Righteousness imprinted the name of kings—the kings of time and eternity—

love and truth. That grave is sacred. From it I can look forth and catch a dim view of where *she* was ushered into being; and—adorable God!—from it I can also have a view of the home of the immortal birth! Sorrow and pain were attendant upon our sight of both—the mortal and the immortal; but, O how comforting the thought, now we have no torturing anxieties—no dreams of pains to be endured. No sin can now darken the purity of her soul. Yes, that is a great comfort, for she longed to be good. She thought her sickness was a punishment for her faults, so conscientious was she. “I *do* wish to be good,” said she. “But I am so sick, and get so weary, that I can’t be as patient as I would be.” Meek spirit! thou art now in that land where “the inhabitant shall not say I am sick, and where their iniquity is forgiven.” Few were thy sins—the faults of impulse; would to God as few rested upon my own soul! We told her why sickness and pain came from God; that it was not always as a punishment for our faults; and the shadow passed away from her eyes. Quietly she bore her lot, and when

she spoke, it was with a birdlike tone—so sweet that its echo can never die. Could we ever keep the spirit thus triumphant,

“We might be happy; but this clay will sink  
Its spark immortal.”

Happy then the thought—a gift that came after “the passion flower”—that immortality lies beyond this life, where no weight of clay shall sink “the spark immortal.” There it shall burn into a flame which no breath can extinguish. The dew-drop of being may expand into a cloud, but it will ever be pure, and just as luminous ages hence, as when it trembled on the leaf of mortality in the radiant morning of life. On, in the circles of eternal progress, the spirit may advance; and every turn, every movement, will be as the wheels in the prophet’s vision—full of brightness, flashing with the eyes of intelligence, with not a single ray dimmed by mist, or shadow, or impurity.

Love seeks the perfection of its object. Immortality secures it without hindrance. The resurrection, then, is indeed, a great thought. . Sometimes it seems too great for

our small minds, and we look upon its expectation as too much presumption—we seem to exalt our nature too high, and claim too much dignity for the soul. But we must do justice to God; we must magnify his grace; and as we attempt to do that, what seems too great a gift to expect from such a being? “He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” That gift answers all doubts, quiets all fears, and brings to the spirit sweet assurance. “In passing the headland at the entrance of the Persian Gulf, the natives throw flowers into the sea to secure a propitious voyage;” with a higher faith, let us strew upon the stream of time the flowers of Christianity as we move towards eternity.

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### THERE IS.

THERE is—I know there is  
By the instincts of my soul,—  
A world of perfect bliss  
Where tides of being roll,

And every heart is pure as dew  
That changes not the lily's hue.

There is—I know the truth  
By the love I bear mine own,—  
A home of endless youth,  
Where every music tone  
That ever swelled the heart to hear,  
Shall vibrate on the spirit's ear.

There is—I knew it true  
By the hope that Christ has given,  
A shore where souls renew  
The bliss of love's bright heaven,  
Where storm-tossed barks at anchor lie,  
With festal pennons floating high.

There is—God speaks it now  
In answer to my prayer,—  
A home of peace, and thou,  
Sweet child of love, art there !  
And swift the wings of time with speed,  
Our longing souls to union lead.

There is—I need it, Lord,  
In penitence for sin,—  
The unction of thy word  
To cleanse the world within,  
That with the pure in heart I may  
See flowers of hope along my way.

## A DREAM AND ITS LESSON.

"What is that, mother?

The swan, my love.—

He is floating down from his native grove;  
Death darkens his eye, it unplumes his wings,  
Yet the sweetest song is the last he sings;  
Live so, my son, that when death shall come  
Swan-like and sweet, it may waft thee home!"

*Bishop Doane.*

I HAD a singular dream last night. It seemed that a clerical friend had called in to my study, and, in pleasant converse with my little boy, he asked him if he had ever played the "Temple of Virtue?" The child replied, that he did not know what that play was; and so my friend took a piece of chalk and sketched out on the floor an eccentric figure, each part of it being inscribed with the name of one of the graces of Christianity. He then told him to try to skip through the whole without transgressing the bounds, or missing a single step, or halting. He bashfully gazed on the strange, yet beau-

tiful figure, and hesitated, half in ignorance and half in indecision. Just at that moment, my departed daughter entered, and with great quickness and inimitable grace, she skipped through the whole and danced away. I could not catch a glance of her face, and when she was gone, I awoke.

How bitter are the tears that gush up when such wakings come! Golden dreams exchanged for iron realities! Ah, then do we need such consolations as God graciously gives in the tenderness of Christ. All the gentleness of our being is moved, and the tenderest sensibilities vibrate as harp-strings quiver after the hand that stirred them is removed. But the anguish is soon allayed, and then the beauty of the vision returns again. The heart is left to ponder on the dream, and to distil from it some sweetness.

Faith turns the dream to reality. The departed one can now circle the virtues, as she could never have done on earth, and we must keep her memory clear in the mind of our boy, that his timidity may be exchanged for high resolve, and his ignorance for the

purest wisdom. It was always a pleasant thought when we remembered that the eldest was a girl—that her gentleness would preside to cast over the lives of those who should follow a protective influence, and to mingle into harsher natures an element of kindness that an elder sister can only impart. Such thoughts can no more be indulged as once they were; but they can be cherished in another form. The memory of the departed can be kept fresh in the heart, and thus a sanctity, the most desirable, can be made to rest upon the life of the children spared. Is not this too little considered? Do not children grow up without a knowledge of their own brothers and sisters which have been removed to the immortal world? The beautiful spirit that so frequently visits the parent, comes not near to the children; and evasive replies are given to them, when they ask the reason for the seriousness that mantles the face of the mother, as spirit holds communion with spirit. The mother fears to tell her children of the visitings of the dead, lest their hearts should be made sad, and lest they should have gloomy thoughts of death and



the grave. Of this, let us talk awhile, and we may be instructed.

And first, parents hide their hearts too much from their children; they let slip from them the best opportunities to impress on the mind of their little ones the depth of parental love, and how much their happiness is bound up in the lives of their offspring. A brief converse with a child, in which the mother's heart has free vent, and the departed are spoken of as love dictates, does more than is imagined to tell that child what he is to his mother—what affections are lavished upon him—what hopes cluster around him—what sympathies and anxieties are continually kept alive concerning him, and what he should be and do to answer such intense, devoted, and perpetual love—love that follows him everywhere and always, that would brave oceans and deserts for his well-being, and seek him should he wander to the farthest and darkest corner in the earth. Yes, love that he sees does not end even with the mortal life of the object, but spans the grave and roams amid the eternities of heaven. Thus the deep affections of the

filial heart would be drawn out, and the tendrils of love would grow more strong and beautiful around the parent vine. Let then, with full faith in immortality, the dream and its lesson be told, rather than turn away from young curiosity, while a vain effort is made to throw a smile of indifference through the gathered tears of the swollen eye of bereavement. Many a child has hushed his mirth, and deemed himself slighted, when, on such occasions, "*nothing*" has been the answer to the tender query, "What makes mother's face so pale?" He *knows* by the pure instincts of the unsophisticated heart, that sorrow, and not trivial sorrow, has taken hold upon the spirit of his parent, and in the sweet affectionate mood of childish sympathy, he would be a partner in her grief. His heart is made sad sometimes, though the repulse be never so kindly made.

"But," interposes the parent, "to tell him what the heart would fain speak, would make him sad." That might be, but would it not be that sadness which "maketh the heart better?" better to meet with a Christian

spirit the variety that life will unfold. Yet the kind of sadness will depend upon the manner and the degree in which the heart shall speak of its sorrows; and if we wish so to speak as to benefit our children, giving them the best views of Providence, shall we not have an additional inducement to seek for truth, to know more of God, to discipline our feelings, to be what we would have them to become? We must feel what we would teach, if we desire to be successful in teaching. The gospel reproduced in the heart, and published in the life, gives forth a beauty whereby the young are captivated, and souls are won by such disciples of wisdom to demonstrate that

"Earth affords no lovelier sight  
Than a religious youth."

The mother, to whom a sweet vision of her departed child in the eternal "Temple of Virtue" is given, can so speak of that vision and of that child, as to leave no scar upon the young heart to deform the beauty of its cheerfulness. She can do this if her own soul has felt and obeyed the lesson of the dream; if she can say with the Apostle, "I

was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." I have seen mothers thus converse with their children, while no clouds of sadness were hovering over the upturned faces, but a feeling was there manifested which seemed like the look on the face of the young Jesus in ancient pictures,—an intense mingling of holy thought and sweet emotion. The eye kindled with delight, and the lip grew fervent as the cheek answered, by its glow, to the heavenly teachings of the rapt mother. When we talk of heaven to a child, we talk of home,

"And that imperial palace whence he came."

He understands more than we dream that he does, and truth falls into his heart like dew into a flower. We catch from his faith a new fervor, and ere we are aware of the regenerator being near us, the child becomes our teacher. Our efforts to simplify our ideas—our labor to make him comprehend our belief, that what we trust in may be brought as the truth to the capacities of his mind, does really increase the power of our faith over our own affections. His queries, too, add interest to our thoughts; and not

seldom do these come as strangely as the questions of Jesus, when, only twelve years of age, he conversed with the teachers in the temple. Jesus gave them answers too ; and so do our children give us answers to many queries that often rise up in the meditative soul. All this gives newness of strength through exercise to thought, and in very deed, God, in our case, "makes the mouths of babes to praise him."

There is no necessity for giving our children gloomy thoughts of death and the grave. To prevent this, there is a better way than to keep silence. Our children will have thoughts of death. There are vacant places in their homes and schools ; the funeral train passes by, and the solemn show arrests them at their play ; they enter the grave-yard, and read the sad inscriptions, and gaze on the sculptured emblems of sorrow and decay ; they see tears of agony shed, and they cannot be blind to the changes death has wrought. These things are not silent. They will utter a language, perhaps more sad than we should give to them, did we become the interpreters of the symbols of death ; and

shall we suffer it to be so? Shall the young imagination be left to a wild growth of luxuriance? for luxuriance it will have in childhood's mind. Better, far better is it to be the interpreter of death to them, as Christ has been to us. Christian hope has the same sympathy for children as for men; and we spoil them "after the rudiments of this world," if we keep them in ignorance of that angel of God. The truths of the gospel are to form childhood's religion; they are to be fixed in the delicate soil ere error has had time to root there; they will be welcome to the affections, for "are they not all ministering spirits?" They will minister to them as seekers for the "Temple of Virtue,"—as guests of the festival held therein. They will lead them on, as Christ would have them led.

Manhood claims an inheritance in the departed, who, though dead, yet can be made to speak. Never will the time come to mortals when this inheritance will not be highly valuable, and the dead cease to bless the living and be their teachers. Children have a like inheritance, and they ought to be per-

mitted to possess and enjoy it. It will enrich them, by relieving them from the poverty of religious experience, and by throwing some glimmerings of light amid so much darkness as really surrounds them. Let us not say, "Wait till they can better understand this matter!" for thus we may say on till the "great teacher, Death," himself has come. Mysteries are the means of the soul's development—the athletic exercises of mind; and we must let the young use whatever strength and skill they have, if we desire them to have more. Let them be guarded by prudence, and let the nicest care be extended to the growing spirit, but do not keep them pent in a little circle of material things. Let them while they are children "think as a child;" aid them to *think*, and be not like too many, terrified lest the keenness of the blade should cut through the scabbard. Cramped, smothered, and tortured thought, murders more than intense thinking; and a freer, gladder, and healthier child does not exist, than a truly thoughtful child. Such was young Jesus of Nazareth, who missed not a step in the "Temple of Virtue."

## THE SISTERLESS BOY.

COMPANIONLESS and lone !  
To thee life's changeful tone  
Is sadness now !  
I grieve to see thee roam  
A stranger in thy home,  
With darkened brow.

But when I strive to cheer,  
I cannot hide the tear  
And smile with joy ;  
The pallid cheek betrays  
I miss her in thy plays,  
My darling boy !

" Last night, O father dear ! "  
Such are the words I hear  
Thee smiling say ;  
" Last night I happy slept,  
For all my thoughts I kept  
On sister May. "

O she was with thee then,  
Thou her sweet face did ken  
Mid shades of eve ;  
I saw her, darling, too,  
More holy was the view  
Than fancies weave.



Still let us speak of her,  
And all the pulses stir  
Of memory's heart ;  
Then will the twilight's wing  
A star of beauty bring,  
To light impart.

And o'er our souls, my boy,  
Shall spread a holy joy  
As when she sung ;  
And then in realms of bliss,  
We'll see the love we miss,  
Angels among.



## CHANGE WITH IDENTITY.

"How shall I know thee?" Thou shalt keep  
The beauty that I worshipped here;  
Within the tomb all ill shall sleep,  
But love and truth shall reappear.

SOME persons were once discussing the possibility of making a likeness of a person very beautiful indeed, far beyond the reality, and yet retaining the resemblance essential to its being recognized and identified. The skill of genius answered the doubt by accomplishing the task, and presenting beauty most perfect, while there was *something* that spake at once the original.

A pleasant thought came to my mind from this fact, that the art of heaven in glorifying the departed is like this labor of genius. To the beloved of our hearts may be given the radiant beauty of angels, while yet their identity or individuality, in the expression of the face, shall be retained. The mother who

says, "I do not wish my child to be changed into the beauty of angels, for I might not know an angel," has here an answer to her fear. The change shall not take the seal away which ever spake to the maternal heart; and that mysterious something which solves all doubts in respect to the individuality of the loved one, will still be there. We see this sometimes when the unskilful artist has labored to obtain a correct portrait. He has drawn the outline incorrectly, and the features are not those of our friend, yet something is there which speaks of that friend; while another may draw the outline with accuracy and the features may seem faultless as a copy, yet the whole has no expression—it is not our friend—there is nothing before the eye that speaks to the heart which longs to recognize a correct likeness.

Subtle speculations may be offered to tell us why these things are so, but they will not satisfy us. We cannot admire the work of a portrait sometimes even when we are unable to offer a single criticism; we cannot point to a single line, or any portion of the color-

ing, with an objection, but yet though we weep while we utter it, our friend is not there! The expression whereby the identity is preserved is a mystery, and it is not a matter of marvelling how that which tells us our beloved is before us can be retained, though the beauty of an angel may be combined with it. In this life we see this comparatively. Disease brings the haggardness of bitter poverty and hardship to the features; the change startles us, and yet we see there our friend. Health comes, and it is joy to look on the full cheek and ruby lip, lighted with the sunshine of mirth or calmer joy, and still the individuality is preserved.

How was it when the Saviour appeared on the mount of transfiguration, when the eyes of the disciples were "lifted up?" He was glorified, and the apostles that were with him were "eye witnesses of his majesty." They saw Jesus—they recognized him they loved, notwithstanding the heavenly change. And so was it with dying Stephen, the first martyr. The heavens to his spiritualized vision were opened, and "he saw the Son of man standing on the right hand of God," and his

gaze was fixed on the identity he beheld till the deep sleep came that followed the dying cry—"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" The glory and exaltation of heaven did not hide the beauty that had won his heart. Changed indeed, was the Lord of life and glory since on the earth he toiled and suffered, but there still the glory of God shone "in the face of Jesus Christ." It shall shine in the face of all the redeemed. The talismanic look shall survive all changes, shall beam above all light with which the immortal features shall be crowned, and shall speak to us effectually. This shall draw us to our own; and once united, we shall then be instinctively led to discern the wonders wrought by grace in the change that has come to the precious parent, companion, child, relative or friend. We shall adore the art that has wrought beauty amid all the lineaments of humanity, like the weaving of the mysteries of the atmosphere amid a scene that lies before us all familiar in its details, but to which distance lends strange enchantment. We cannot mistake the scene—its identity is beyond question—we need not fear that wildness has come to

our brain, and yet like a dream of fairy land the view lies before us. We are removed from the sight of defects, perhaps of deformities, and all is beautiful, enchantingly beautiful! We linger upon the hill top with delight, and although the sketching painter has made "a fine," or "a grand picture," yet that which stretches itself out before us surpasses its attractions.

May not the influence of our distance from earth and mortality, after death, be like to this when we gaze on the immortal? May not the spiritual point of view be such, that defects once discerned, shall appear no more, and perfect beauty really demand our admiration and love? Yes, even deformities may be absorbed in the distance, left shrouded in the atmosphere of the past, as deformities in the landscape are lost in the azure hue. In the bright heaven of eternal grace, amid the celestial spirits that glorify God, we may humbly believe that

"Every form, *Affection* can repair  
From dark oblivion, glows divinely there."

Again: there have been times when a

precious child, or a friend, has appeared to us beautiful beyond expression, and with all our love—allowing its influence to impart beauty to its objects—they were strangely lovely. And when are these occasions? They are when the light of the spirit shines out in peculiar brightness, and we seem to be conversing with an angel. Our affection is kindled deeper by the holy beauty; and by this influence, the loveliness still increases, till we thrill with the enchantment of the vision. How beautiful would these friends be, could such a light always gleam from the spirit, like a sunbeam lighting up a dew-drop with all the colors of the rainbow! Remove from them the influences that belong to earth—that drag the spirit down from its holiest heights, and that bind upon it the weight of perplexing and perhaps vexatious cares and anxieties, and what a change would be effected! Let the affectionate mood be perfected, and let it cast over the being the amiability that alone belongs to that temper of mind, and should we not see loveliness that would enrapture us? Let this be, and the sweetness that rests on the features of

the bride, as she takes the solemn vow, would never depart. The wasting power of time and labor would not be known, and transcendent beauty would rejoice us with its revelations of immortal youth. In heaven this shall be. "The inhabitants shall not say I am sick, and their iniquity shall be forgiven." The prodigal in his father's house shall be like, and yet O how unlike, what he was in "the far country!" The dearly beloved—whose existence as a gift from God woke the devoutest gratitude in our hearts,—shall shine there in glory exceeding the happiest hour on earth. "From glory to glory," shall the change be, and yet love shall be answered. No shadow shall be cast over the test that speaks to the seeking spirit, and no eye shall be "dazzled with excess of light" radiated from the glorified faces of the immortals. We shall have our child, though an angel!

Changes must come to the dead. All that should repel the eye from a steady gaze, are the changes which belong solely to the earth. They belong to the shroud, the coffin, and the tomb. They are connected with the visible—with that which appeals to the senses. Like



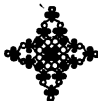
the fading and perishing of a flower that holds the seed of a future loveliness, the earthly must become robbed of all beauty; "it is not quickened except it die;" and our hope lies in the invisible. It shall be "raised," and with that thought is connected sweet images and affectionate sentiments. We long to greet the new flower, sure that we shall know it, and that its beauty will delight us. We can submit to the earthly change in view of that which shall come when the season of floral beauty shall return. And so with the departed, over whose fading we have wept tears like the autumn rains. We can submit to the divine decree, because beyond all that repels the loving heart and chills the sensibilities, there is glory unsearchable. Unsearchable, but yet revealed enough to take away all fear lest that glory shall ever be followed with fading and decay. There they shall not die any more. Tears shall be wiped from off all faces. Sorrow shall be dead, past resurrection, and therefore its shadow can no more darken the picture of blissful life.

Thus we are made willing that our beloved

departed may be changed to angels. The change shall not destroy their identity. It shall not make them a different race of beings. Their elevation in spirituality shall not raise them above any tenderness they cherished for us on earth ; for, indeed, the angels are the tenderest of beings—they are united in our minds with all that is gentle, with all that is lovely, in the purest sense. We love to speak of them as “ministering spirits;” and if we will keep this before our mind, we shall never associate with the idea of an angel any dignity that is repulsive, or a majesty that would hush the mirth of a child, or bring a cloud to a festival by its appearance there.

Let then the child be an angel. We will think over the precious past. We will cull all the glimpses of beauty that have been given to our sight, and weave them into an whole, as Milton made all loveliness in nature tributary to his one picture of Eden. That face of our angel is a better Eden than Milton's Paradise. All the heavenly has become tributary to its perfection, through the Father's grace in the ministry of his Son and

angels. The serpent shall never cast his dark line there, as of old transgression moved in shadows over the flowers of the garden. Sin has ended its reign, and calm and serene as the first sabbath in Eden shall that immortal loveliness remain. The child is an angel, but still ours. We will wait the time when it shall be given us to see how beautiful heaven can make a face and yet preserve the identity.



## THE VOICE.

TELL me, ye that sweep the lyre,  
Mid the bright celestial choir,  
Will the voice of mortals die  
When they cleave the distant sky,  
Entering in the holiest, where  
Love's the vital atmosphere,—  
Say, will they lose the mortal tone  
When from earth the spirit's flown?

I cannot lose the hope to greet  
Tones of love, when I shall meet  
Those who passed behind the veil,  
When the eye in death grew pale;  
There's no music vibrates here,  
Waking mingled smile and tear,  
Like the voices I have known,  
Sweeter than a fairy's tone.

When I enter in that world,  
Where the flag of strife is furled,  
Let me hear familiar voice,  
And my spirit will rejoice:  
I shall know the cherished here,  
In that blest eternal sphere;  
Heart to heart again shall beat,  
Bowed in prayer at Mercy's seat.

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Lofty hymns of praise may swell,  
Raptured souls His grace may tell,—  
All along the living wires,  
On the harps of seraph choirs,  
Glorious songs of bliss may burn,—  
Yet my soul for more will yearn,  
If amid the voices there  
Come no tones that moved me here.



## TRUE SYMPATHY.

"Though thine is a holy lot  
To walk in the glow of heaven,  
I mourn for the pleasures that now are not  
That alone with thee were given!  
And I raise these eyes  
To thine own blue skies,  
With a grieving spirit for joys thus riven."

IN dealing with the grief of others, we must approach the heart through the conscience, in the same manner as when dealing with human guilt. The moral sense must approve our positions, or we shall not advance in our work as a consoler. We may, for instance, endeavor to bear the desponding mind back to the past, that a review of kind and generous labors for others' good, may give satisfaction to the soul by better ideas of its usefulness, enabling it to drink of the waters which it had disinterestedly drawn for others. But this course will not do, inasmuch as conscience is busy in recalling the misimprovements of the past, and the

frequent ill correspondence of duty and action, purpose and deed. Conscience is not kept on the side of the consoler, and did he know this, he would change his position and turn to some other view of life and its manifold relations.

This reflection is of wide and extensive significance. It should be pressed carefully into our Sacred Flora, that we may be reminded to "comfort others *by the comfort* wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." One of its numerous applications is this,—we must be cautious and discreet not to *underrate* the heaviness of the loss sustained by the heart which we fain would console. "The heart *knoweth* its own bitterness," and the knowledge that springs from bitter experience is the farthest from the touch of others. Where such knowledge is fostered, we must not expect to dry tears with speaking of "a common loss," and descanting on the undue magnitude given to the bereavement by the agony of grief. While the ear listens to such speech, the heart is recounting its memories; it journeys over years, and, swift as "the wings of the morning," it

takes its flight from scene to scene of vanished happiness. The heart is wayward in its grief, and we must kindly bear with this waywardness, till gentleness shall have stolen in and lighted up the halls of the soul with the mystic lamps of heaven.

When the prophet described the going into captivity of the children of Israel, he saw the scene of desolation; he read the feelings of crushed hearts, and as the mournful multitude pursued their journey, he saw them, in vision, pass the tomb of Rachel, and by a fine stroke of the poetry of grief, he represented Rachel as rising from the dead to bewail the condition of her children. When the Evangelist made the record of the Bethlehem mothers, as they wept over their infants slain by the cruelty of Herod, the mournful words of Jeremiah were recalled, and plaintive indeed is the history: "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." There are many such Rachels, towards whom there is less consideration extended than should be extended by



those who would fain be consolers ; they are consequently addressed more in the language of rebuke than judiciousness authorizes. Of their "refusing to be comforted," we will speak in another place, but now let us pause awhile on the causes of the deep and lasting sorrow for the dead, summed up in the reason,—"*Because they are not.*"

However strong our hope of Immortality may be, however shadowless may be our visions of futurity, however bright the beauty and glory of heaven, however sweet-toned the harp taken from the willow and swept by the hand of rapture beneath the tree of life,—yet there is a sad sense in which our departed children *are not*. "The heart," some one has truthfully said, "always remains human, however divine its hopes may be." It is well that it should be so, or the devoutest Christian might become an enthusiast, or move as an abstraction amid the unnoticed duties of life. The purposes to be answered by our pilgrimage here, require that there should be, as there is, a struggle between the Soul and the Senses. All knowledge results from victories on the part of the

soul in this strife. All virtue is the "overcoming the world" of sense; and the loftiest holiness comes through endurance "as seeing the invisible." This warfare taxes at times all our strength, skill, and courage. We grow desperate in the heat of the battle; and the sweat of agony attests that we would not be of the slain. "In this war there is no discharge;" and the reason is plain: our senses recall the dead in a thousand situations; the tiniest thing, the slightest movement, the faintest tone, the stillest wave of memory, recalls the departed, and the waters of grief pass over us; but ere we can have the consolations of religion, we must think and meditate—a pause in the stir of the elements must come ere the "still small voice" shall be heard, speaking peace to the soul. The intricacies of life have woven our thoughts around a thousand objects from which we cannot turn. When the dead were with us, we loved to connect them with every form of transient and permanent beauty, that we might have, as it were, the omnipresence of love to bless and cheer us; but now that they are gone, this omnipresence remains, yet oh, how

altered is its aspect! To this, we are subject—it subdues us—we are prostrate ere we are conscious that our foothold of strength has in the least been weakened. It is this that craves pity for the bereaved—that bids the professed consoler to speak gently lest he call that sin which is in fact the overflowing of sensibility, just as much, for a time, beyond human mastery, as the tides of the sea. Tell the weeper that the child lives in heaven, and she will not question your words, but leaping from the heart springs the bitter truth—the child lives not as once it lived—home is no longer heaven—for the child *is not* to the senses, and the desponding spirit takes up the lament,

“ Mine eyes are robbed of what they loved to see,  
Mine ears of the dear words they used to hear,  
My longing arms of the embrace they covet.”

These *are not!* and in that sad utterance there is eloquence beyond all power of transcript; and tears will flow as from exhaustless fountains.

Let me place here a flower I have just culled from memory. I but heard the rush-

ing of the wings of years, and was placed where I could not but put forth my hand and take the flower, weaving around it those mournful words which so often I have made mine ; " I am distressed for thee, my brother ! very pleasant hast thou been unto me ; thy love to me was wonderful ! " The scene that thus comes to me is this :—The dead had been borne to the tomb ; the head had drooped in tears of bitterness, and the eye had been raised to heaven in reverent hope. The sad train returned, and *the childless widower*, bereft at once of companion and offspring, walked the bridal chamber in the impetuosity of utter desolation. A mother sought to comfort, and well succeeded for the time. She spake of the duties to which he must live, and that despair would be no fitting monument to one whose life was pleasantness and usefulness wherever it touched humanity. Heroism seemed to enter as from heaven, and the lofty brow shone with the light of holy resolution. The eye uplifted, shone like a bright star veiled by a light mist, more beautiful than when glittering in clearness, and bespoke resignation ; the firm

lip told of fixed purpose, and the clasped hands denoted the prayer that winged its silent way to heaven. "Yes, I will live for the family," said he, "and will serve it as God shall give me ability." Our tears were now shed with a new feeling, and we prayed for strength to be given him from on high. When about to leave for the paternal home, he chanced to let his hand open a drawer and there lay the open page of a note he had written in a pleasant mood to his companion, to prepare to attend a festival on the evening of the day on which it was penned. Instantaneously, all the fostered strength was gone! The tides of feeling rushed in impetuous fullness, and he was overwhelmed. Never did that lost strength return—and soon he died. "I want to go home," was his speech, when he seemed to be talking to no one. "You are at home!" said the mother, who thought he was wandering in mind. "I know it," he added, "but I mean my *heavenly* home."

Speak tenderly to the Rachels who are with more than man's sensibility, the victims of all-powerful association—who admit all you would have them admit concerning im-

mortality, but to whom, nevertheless, a thousand symbols of the past tell that the loved *are not*. The paradox is felt, and love will breathe its excuse in the soberest hour of thought:

“To streams that glide in noon, the shade  
From summer skies is given ;  
So, if my breast reflects the cloud,  
’Tis but the cloud of heaven !  
Her image glassed within my soul,  
So well the mirror keepeth,  
That, chide me not, if with the light  
The shadow also sleepeth.”

Yes, so it is ! they cannot, and we cannot, have the image of the dead without the shadows. The daguerreotypes of the soul, pencilled by the sun-rays of affection, must retain their shadows even when we turn them to the light of heaven that we may discern the features we love. It is by the shadows that we see them ! To us, in one sense, they cannot be angels. Our hearts ask for our human loves ; we shrink, as too impure, from companionship with angelic beings ; and as we gaze from scene to scene out of which their faces gleam, and find them but

visions, we cannot but take up lamentation, we must weep, and our souls indulge great mourning. We feel that it is nigh impossible that we can be comforted, and though our hearts run over with grateful appreciation of the sympathetic kindness of friends, yet nothing promises to "turn the shadow of death into morning." The weeper breathes out the sick man's moan, "would God it were morning!" as though it would really never be morning again. Yet is there not in that term something that suggests hope the most consoling? for that morning shall follow day, is the fixed ordination of Heaven, and with the idea of its approach springs to view many pleasant scenes. We should yield to its leadings, believing that unto us a hope may come, "as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain."

Sorrow is not sin. But let us not forget that in no atmosphere which man is called to breathe, has God neglected to mingle hope. Let us strive to go out where we can freely inhale hope, and then we shall utter our sor-

row with a different tone. The dead shall become our teachers, and our prayer shall be,—

“ Oh ! teach me with a firmer grasp to seize  
The passing day, nor with omitted deeds,  
Nor the defrauded sympathies of love,  
Load the uncertain future. So the tomb  
Shall be my blessed instructor, and I'll go  
Sadder, yet wiser, to my work again,  
Amid the changeful ministries of life.”





## THE BURIAL.

'T WAS in the month of flowers,  
The balmy month of June,  
When joy crowned all the hours,  
And nature was in tune,—  
'T was then she drooped and wasted,  
All gentle to the last,  
And ere we dreamed, death hastened  
His shrouding veil to cast.

With bleeding hearts we bore her,  
And laid her in the tomb,  
With summer skies bright o'er her,  
But in our hearts deep gloom.  
Not that with hopeless sorrow  
Our anguished hearts were riven,  
For oh! we hoped *a morrow*  
Would give us her and heaven.

We mourned the day unbrightened  
By smiles that were our joy;  
We wept our toils unlightened  
By sportiveness' employ.  
We missed the nightly praying,  
So trustful and so pure;  
Her holy words we're saying—  
God help us to endure.

## CONSOLATION.

**"So shalt thou find in work and thought,  
The peace that sorrow cannot give;  
Though grief's worse pangs to thee be taught,  
By thee let others noblier live."**

*Sterling.*

WE have considered the indulgence which mourning Rachels should have extended to them, and in this we have also seen how we must prepare ourselves against the coming of the lightning shock of memory; the next duty is to pluck a branch from the healing plant for the bitter waters. The same caution which bereavement would utter, bidding us not to underrate its sorrow, its occasion for grief, the struggle of the spirit with the senses, should be heeded in its application to the consolation which a merciful God has provided for the stricken of our race. They ought to be careful not to underrate the comforts of the Gospel, and take heed that they be not voluntarily "wedded to calamity." All the pictures that please the eye ought

not to be of mortal life, and our plea should not be so confident as the mourner of old :

"Grief fills the room up of my absent child;  
Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me;  
Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,  
Remembers me of all his gracious parts,  
Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form;  
*Then have I reason to be fond of grief.*"

Grief can do all this, but if it be grief unmingled with a willingness to be consoled, the heart will waste under it; blight and mildew will come to the best fruit of adversity; the soul will continually be cast down, and never will it lift the filial thanksgiving, "Thou art the health of my countenance and my God:" "I know that my Redeemer liveth!"

We ought not shghtingly to pass by the assurances that our strength may be "equal to our day"—that we can do all things through the strengthening influence of Christ—and that though the outward man perish, yet the inward man may be renewed day by day, while we look, not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, but are spiritual and eternal.

We read a comparison in the Scriptures which speaks of our afflictions as "light;" and yet there was no trifling intended, no outrage to the sanctities of grief, no doubting the reality of sorrows of mountain weight. The Apostle who wrote that comparison, had seen dire calamities, and his enumeration of the afflictions which had beset him, is a most mournful chime of doleful bells. But he rightly magnified God's grace; he did not keep low in the valley of Baca, and deny that morning was spread upon the mountains. He went out where the light shone, and the chill that rested upon his spirits while he dwelt in the vale, was gently taken away by the genial warmth of the rising sun. He was braced by the effort made to rise, and his piety became stronger by the ascent to mount Pisgah. How triumphant was his language—"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." Therefore,

when he stood serene amid the wrecks of objects once dear, and still saw the mighty waves of tribulation sweeping on towards him with unabated fury, he could thank God for the triumph he enjoyed in the omnipotence of faith, as he declared, "By the grace of God, I am what I am."

If others—if thousands in circumstances like those, amid which we by our bereavement are placed, have been comforted, why should we refuse to be comforted? Are we so different from them that we presume no consolations which were adequate to their wants will answer ours? "Are the consolations of God small" with us? Are we exempt from the universal law whereby all things seek unity with good and to repose in peace? Shall our language continually be, "Come and see if any sorrow is like my sorrow!" as though God had lifted his arm to strike us with greater force than any mortal ever felt before? By indulging this spirit, we make ourselves the objects of a severer discipline than others are called to endure; divine Providence appears in greater terrible-ness than we imagine it can assume to oth-

ers; and by and by, we shall sink into the despondency of those who deem themselves not cared for of God as others are. We thus make the fact to be, that we *cannot* be comforted, while the real truth is we *refuse* to be comforted. There is danger, however, lest we permit the sensibilities to be a prey to grief too long and desperately, so that they lose all capacity of being restored to a healthy tone and vigor. And then,

“ All things that we ordain festival,  
Turn from their office to black funeral;  
Our instruments, to melancholy bells,  
Our wedding cheer, to a sad burial feast;  
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change;  
Our bridal flowers serve for a burial corse,  
And all things change them to contrary.”

Rightly stating to ourselves our affliction, and seeing what religion in like cases has done for others, we cannot refuse to be comforted. It were ingratitude to the God of Christianity to do so; it were to throw from us the tenderness of the Almighty; it were to voluntarily exile ourselves from the mountain views of the promised land. When we are relieved from such ingratitude, our souls

will be open to the reception of consoling considerations, that will come to us, as at twilight star after star breaks forth, till at last the sky is full of light shining in mild magnificence, and lifting up the soul to heaven.

Yes, consoling considerations will thus multiply to the reverent and studious spirit. It will ponder on the affections which the precious departed has awakened. And should we not be grateful for everything that awakens love—the key to spiritual mysteries? and though a flower is loaned to us in the bud and taken ere it has bloomed, yet we should be grateful for what has gladdened us, and muse on the unfolding beauty elsewhere.

The reverent spirit will ponder on the interest which the departed have given to life. "How it makes the heart all over again to have a child," said a father to me once; and potent is the power of such a blessed creature to make even poverty endurable and labor welcome. And this interest need not die away when the precious one is gone, for its memory is linked with many things that

had no peculiar charm till that memory was entwined around them. The sickness and death we deplore have been the agencies of God to awaken the intense affections that make us prize the departed and weep so bitterly. We could not otherwise know the strength of our love; and knowing it, it should lead us to heaven where it shall be answered as earth has no power to answer it. It is a beautiful ordination of God, that we cannot minister to the sick without having them more endeared to us; and when sickness has developed our tenderness and death enters to take from us our charge, then, with magic acuteness, all the beauties of the past rise to view, and we have indeed lost a cherub! The child could never appear so beautiful as it does now, without the intervention of sickness and death; and at the very moment that we are called to say "farewell," we are made to feel this matchless beauty that we might ask more earnestly after heaven. We wrong our Creator if we use this love only in mourning over our loss, rather than in attempting to estimate the gain of death.

And is not the spiritual world brought



nearer by the departure of the beloved? It has now something to which we have a better claim than any one save God;

“Though thou art born in heaven above,  
I only am thy mother!”

We cannot but feel an interest in a country whither a child has gone. We ask to know all that we can know: every voice from thence conveying intelligence is eagerly listened to, and with every new idea, the land becomes less distant. A letter from a stranger has deep interest; much more has one from a friend; and has not God written to us from the spirit land? have we not epistles of divine love? have we never read, “It is well with the child?” Let the heart still seek to read of that world, and it shall be comforted.

And not of slight worth to produce that result, will be the thought that all our anxieties for the departed child are ended. We had many. It is the lot of humanity to cherish them; for there are fearful dangers to which our children are exposed in a world of imprudence, disease, and sin. Many times have we been startled, by day and night, and

the blood has almost curdled in our veins by fears. Thank God! they are ended! But yet some offer thanks rather unwillingly, because they say that they would be willing to have all these anxieties if they could but have the child that is gone! Yet they should remember the child's happiness as well as their own; and may it not be that God has taken it away, because we were not able to estimate the dangers to which it was exposed, nor to provide against them were they known? But let us not wrestle against God, and since He has seen fit to afflict us, let us ask from what he has also relieved us. Let us take one lesson from a young mother, who, when seated beside the lovely dead, said to me, "It is some comfort to think that when I die, it will be pleasant to reflect that I am going to meet my children, instead of leaving them to less than a mother's love." It was wise to indulge such a consideration—to take hold on a thought that brought by the imagination a sweet vision of heaven; and far better was the soul thus employed, than in lamenting that which could not be reversed. And it may be that to her, as to

many a dying one, the spirits of the loved and gone, in angel forms, shall float around the couch of languishing, ready to bear the wearied one to immortal rest; and as they sing, the music of the past shall be heard, and on the wings of melody the spirit shall float to the ark of Love.

We shall not want for consoling considerations, if we will but pause with equal delight over the promises of the future, as over the relics of the past. The memories of the twilight hymn and the evening prayer; the sportiveness and the innocence of childhood's beauty and grace; the twining love that answered so purely and tenderly our affection,—oh, these make the heart impatient with the grief it must bear; but the teachings of Christ's religion shall fall balmily upon the bleeding heart and steal away the piercing pain and anguish. We shall wait in that submission which makes the soul true to the living, and the burden of our thoughts of the dead shall be—

“They cannot come to us, but we  
Ere long to them may go;  
That glimpse of immortality,  
Is heaven begun below.”

## I'LL WAKE AT DAWN.

"I'LL wake at dawn!" the gentle sufferer said,  
Just as our Father joined her with the dead,—  
Just as the midnight of our grief came on,  
And not a star in all our heaven shone.

Was it prophetic of the angel-birth,  
The soul released from every hold on earth,  
And leaving darkness, grief and sickness here,  
Soaring to light in its own native sphere?

O tell us! spirits of the mystic dead!  
In the last hour are seraph pinions spread,  
To brood in love, to waken in the soul  
A birth of hope that spurns the grave's control?

When came *the dawn*? The paling of our stars?  
Or the swift wheeling of the eternal cars  
Of light and glory, to the spirit's eye  
Beyond the portals of the glorious sky?

We cannot know; but a fair dawn shall come,  
And thou shalt wake in that eternal home,  
Where we shall greet thee when this life is o'er,  
To weep and suffer, and to part no more!

Bright view of death—a sleep, and then a dawn;  
An awful night—a blest unfolding morn!  
We wait the passing of the shadowy time,  
In patience, born of faith and hope sublime.

## BLESSING GOD IN SORROW.

"God's mercy," to myself I said,  
"To both our souls is given—  
To me—sojourning on earth's shade,  
To her—a saint in heaven!"

*Wilson.*

"*The Lord gave;*" he answered a want which our affections deeply felt, and heard our prayers. The dear gift lived in our sight, our hearing, and our feeling. A thousand affections bloomed at once. The day was cheered by its presence, and a tender and sweet interest was thrown around life by the consciousness of the possession of this divine favor. Its smile hallowed home, and we loved to mark the unfolding of some new beauty each day, and to feel the debt of gratitude to God increasing. It was a rich happiness to pay that debt by fervent thanksgiving, and by ardent prayer, that we might see more clearly our duty and promptly perform it. . . The Lord gave a golden link to the

natural chain that connects the soul with heaven; and indeed our souls should rise up to bless him fervently. The child lived to a good purpose for our moral nature.

But alas! the breath on the harp wakes another tone, and a melancholy strain comes forth, "*The Lord hath taken away.*" The gift has departed, and like the vanishing of the wind, no one can tell whence it hath gone. We pause at twilight, as the wind passes over our heated brow, and muse whence it goeth—to what fields of air it journeys, and where it shall greet its home; but we muse in vain. We cannot track the passing wind or spirit, and deeply do we feel that "there is a path which" not only "no fowl," but also which no human being "knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen." Yes, the spirit that is "taken away" pursues a course which only the redeemed know, and in which poor mortals would be dazzled with splendor "above the brightness of the sun." But if it is God who "taketh away," then it is God who leads the spirit on; and under his care and protection, we can fear no evil as befalling the beloved. In our

"Father's house are many mansions"—many spheres of being, many homes of spirits; if the truth were not so, the honest lips of Jesus would have declared it; but because it was a truth, and man needed to feel it that he might have the comforter, Jesus went the mysterious way of divine love, and came again—the crucified became the risen. His absence was the preparation, as it were, of a place for his disciples, because it was accompanied by circumstances essential to the production of a deep and inflexible conviction of the resurrection. He came again as the risen; he received again his disciples; and they were with him—with him, though he "ascended" and they remained on the earth; so deep and fervent was their conviction of the great issues of the resurrection. This conviction wrought the most wonderful changes; the timid became bold, and the martyr's pile had no power to strike terror to the soul. The Egyptian fable of the Phoenix, rising in the freshness of youth from his own ashes,—the new springing from the old,—became thus a tale of truth; for the Christians readily gave themselves to the

fires, with a feeling; for which *hope* is too weak a word, that the falling ashes of the body would prove but the striking off from the soul the chains that bound it to mortality and evil. The Lord would take away the enfranchised spirit, was their conviction; and knowing the perfection of the taker, they did not disturb themselves with questionings concerning the path. "Blessed be God!" was their soul-felt language, as they parted from the near and dear.

The children of faith take up the same words, and lift the burden of grief, in the parting hour, somewhat from the agonized heart, by the feelings of reverence towards God which a true utterance of that language implies. Are *we* such children? If so, feeling the preciousness of the gift which God bestowed in our child, and the greatness of the loss in its departure, yet we can say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord!" *This* is the test of piety; it is a trial of our faith in the immortality of spirit; it proves the depth and sincerity of our professed trust in God and reliance upon the perfect rectitude of his dealings with humanity.



But do we mark the important phrase—"the *name* of the Lord," in Job's exclamation? While we have indefinite views of the divine character, it will be impossible to be submissive with a filial spirit under the dark mysteries of bereavement. A filial spirit only springs from a love that is directed towards a parent; and "the name," or the character, "of the Lord," must assume an amiability to us, before we can offer our reverential ascription. We need, in our sorrow, to have the rapt feelings of Jacob, when he saw upon the countenance of Esau a love he did not dream to meet there, and exclaimed, "I have seen thy face as though I had seen *the face of God!*" How few have such an ideal of God—the height of all beauty, the centre of amiability, the essence of love. With such a conception of God, the clouds that encompass our path would to us, as well as to Jean Paul, wear the aspect of angel faces, and from angel lips come to us tones of plaintive music that soothe and comfort.

Standing by a child's grave, let us bless God! bless him that he gave us such a dear

object to love, as one whose departure has drawn upon every sympathy of the soul. The more dear we make the child to have been, the higher becomes the claim of God for our gratitude who gave it,

“To show how sweet a flower  
In Paradise would bloom.”



## AN EVENING THOUGHT.

THE stars have pierced the gloom,  
And glittering o'er me hang,  
Like angels round the tomb,  
Who first the triumph sang  
When Jesus from the power of death,  
Breathed freedom with immortal breath.

O spirit of my child,  
Be to my soul a star !  
And in this night so wild,  
Shine on me from afar,  
And light the gloom that gathers round,  
Which long my weeping soul has bound.

Though glorious are the skies  
Lit with celestial fires,  
The vision of thine eyes  
Would answer more desires ;  
I'd sit and watch their holy light  
Till nature sunk in slumber's night.

I own sweet fancy's power  
As now I choose a star,  
And in this solemn hour  
I see thy features there ;  
Thine eyes run o'er with tenderness,  
'Thy sympathy my sorrows bless.'

## CHRIST THE COMFORTER.

There is a spell around my spirit cast ;  
A shadow where the sunbeam smiled before ;  
'T is grief, but all its bitterness is past ;  
'T is sorrow, but its murmurings are o'er.  
Within my soul, which to that storm was bowed,  
Now the white wing of peace is folded deep,  
And I have found, I trust, behind the cloud,  
The blessing promised to the eyes that weep.  
*M. A. Dodd.*

Not through the mediums which the hand of learning can open has God confined the flowings of his comforting mercies. His truth can indeed feed and strengthen, and lift to loftier heights of excellence the greatest mind, but to the humblest cottager He imparts as rich an abundance of spiritual aid. He speaks through human affections, through the sympathies that belong to our common nature, and this is done effectually by bringing, as a full, and all-sufficient revelation, a perfect character.

This claims from us a peculiar gratitude, which will be felt when we consider what we particularly require in times of deep grief,

when the imagination, from constant and intense exercise, is very active. We are unfitted for long trains of argument and continued reflection on speculative points, and we need something that shall stand out as prominently as the dead, and appeal to us as from God. This, the revelation of truth in Jesus Christ, fully answers. We can there study actions; we can meditate on character; and the active affections which our bereavement has developed in wondrous strength, better fit us, than we have ever been fitted, to study Jesus.

In all moods of mind, there is food for meditation in the character of Christ; and it is by bringing together the reflections suggested in these different moods of mind, that we are able to have the image of God before our gaze in some degree of perfection. In this light, affliction is of great worth, by giving a new ability to look with new and deeper interest on the character of Christ; his face has a new aspect, as we follow him from scene to scene where he became the Consoler, and especially as he stood by the side of the grave of Lazarus. There "Jesus

wept!" and as he weeps, we feel that he indeed had human sympathies; we love to watch those falling tears; we delight to behold the warm tenderness in the eye; we see a glow upon the cheek, and a fervor of feeling upon the lip, which reaches at once to our heart. We cannot but linger with him, and balm, insensibly to us, flows into the wounded soul, as we contemplate the character before us. We could not be thus interested in any theory—in any speculative thoughts, however profound, or however abundant the promises of good to be received by attention to them.

How grateful, then, should we be that "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God *in the face* of Jesus Christ." We should be grateful for this, because there is nothing more interesting than "the human face divine." The works of God are ever interesting; for though he has magnified his word above the means which nature affords to understand the Divine character, yet those works teach us something of God. We see

everywhere tokens that goodness ruled in the works of creation—that evil is never essential evil, but subsidiary to good ; and this is a great point gained. It gives us pleasant themes for reflective hours, and leads us to meditate on the possible good tendencies of whatever may afflict us in the moral world. But yet the precious words of inspiration come to our souls with a diviner influence, and man everywhere has loved to make them the language of his griefs and his joys, his fears and his hopes. Yet beyond this in attraction, in moral power, in spiritual influence, is the character of Christ—"the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." There, all his former works, God has outdone. The revelation made through him, stands in the same relation to all others, as the creation of Adam held towards all other forms of the manifestation of the Creator's perfections. All the rest of creation was made tributary to man. His construction and endowments imply the existence of the outward world, and enthroned above every living thing on the earth, was the moral nature of man. The moral perfections

of the Deity exhibited in the creation of vegetable and animal existences, and the vast variety of God's handiwork, made no appeal to the cattle upon a thousand hills, the forest beasts, the feathered tribes, and the inhabitants of the multitudinous waters. To man alone did they speak ; and to his moral nature was given dominion over every other form of life. And it is thus with all the various revelations which God has made of himself, as they relate to Jesus Christ. He crowns the whole. The universe of colors finds a miniature in the rainbow, as it bends in beauty above us, and so of the infinite God there is given to us a perfect representation in Jesus. "God is Light, and in him is no darkness at all ;" and so with the Image of Light. Look on Jesus, and you see nothing but love. Follow him through all the scenes where his divine power was demonstrated, and not a single instance is found where that power brought a curse on humanity. Not an eye that was open to the light of heaven, did he close ; not an ear that could drink in the melodies of the streams, the forest and the winds, did he stop ; not a tongue



that made joy vocal, that uttered the pleasant words of mirth, or sung the rich songs of gladness, did he hush; not a foot, bounding in the vivacity of enjoyment, or leaping in ecstasy, did he make to halt; and not on a single brain did he bring the heat of fever or the frenzy of madness and despair. No, no! "He did all things well"—*well*, as compared with the highest and purest standard of goodness. Not once did the lightning of wrath, desolating and destroying, burst from him, and amid the keenest agonies he was still the Image of the God of Love. "In him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" every divine perfection was possessed and illustrated; not indeed possessed in the infinitude in which God himself possesses perfection, for in that sublime sense "all the fulness of the Godhead" could not dwell bodily in human shape. "The heaven of heavens cannot contain Him."

Christ is the Way to God. To see him is to see the Father. A clearer, fuller, and more brilliant display of God, cannot be obtained. "All the diffused and scattered rays of Divinity that lighten and illustrate the

universe, seem concentrated in him, softened, humanized, subdued, and infused with infinite mildness, pathos, tenderness, compassion, that overwhelms the soul with an impression of unutterable kindness, sympathy, and affection. How truly can it be said, he that hath seen Jesus hath seen God, as full, as rich, as direct a manifestation of God as can be seen in this world of guilt, sin and darkness." Blessed be God for the light of *the knowledge* of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ!

When mystery presses heavily on the spirit, and the funeral pall of grief is spread over every form of loveliness, let us summon to our presence the face of Jesus, by dwelling on some of the many touching incidents in his career. A light shall emanate therefrom which will illumine our darkness; and from a calm and beautiful face comes a quieting influence that only heaven can excel. By gazing on the face of Jesus we shall find the comfort that we need, for he will lead us to God through the affection he kindles by the works which God gave him power to do. "Believe me," said he, "for the very works

sake." Yes, let his wondrous works speak to us : wrest not away the miracles of Christ ; they all are types of that omnipotence which shall bid all blindness, deafness and dumbness, all disease and deformity, to flee before the transcendent glory of his goodness in man's introduction to the immortal state. O, if Christ *be* the way to God—if we may see in him an accurate Image of the Eternal Father, then indeed we ought to be comforted, and humbly wait the developments of wonder-working grace.

He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever," said St. Paul ; and if so, how sweet is the thought of his kindness to children ! He welcomes them still to his side, and they still have his blessing. Holy, indeed, is the vision where he is seen opening the way for the children of Hebrew mothers, who sought his blessing on their little ones ; but more beautiful is the dream of heaven that shows a more peaceful path opened for the dear departed to greet his love.

"And honored be all childhood, for the sake  
Of that high love ! Let reverential care  
Watch to behold the immortal spirit wake,  
And shield its first bloom from unholy air."

## THOU HAST GONE.

Thou hast gone! thou hast gone! and we meet thee  
no more,

Where thy smile was so bright, and thy voice  
had a strain

That made the soul dream of the blessings in store  
In the home of the spirit, beyond the dark main.

Thou hast traversed that sea, and thy spirit in  
bliss

Looks down on the shadows that encompass us  
here,

Thou seest the Love whose impalpable kiss,  
From mortality's cheek, absorbs the last tear.

Faith ended in sight, and the glories on high  
Now impart thee a strength none but angels can  
know;

How clear is thy vision—far reaching thine eye!  
From lips now immortal what melodies flow!

We will dwell on the joy to thy spirit thus given,  
And learn the content which bright hope will  
impart;

We will trust in God's mercy to meet thee in  
heaven,  
And this shall be balm to the sorrowing heart.



## THE SCRIPTURES.

"Over the gospel we may write what the Egyptians did over the library—'This is the hospital for sick souls.'"

*Heart's Ease.*

THE early Christians used a branch of fresh palm for a mark in reading the Scriptures. The palm has ever been symbolical of victory, and as thus used, did it not denote the victories achieved by reading and studying that holy book? What wondrous victories have been achieved by this simple means! The hidden strength of the soul has thus been developed, and the sting extracted from the keenest sorrows. The wonderful adaptability of that book to all classes of minds, has been tested; and however the ages of society have advanced, yet in the words of that volume man can find himself anticipated, and be furnished with the best language for affection and emotion, for prayer and aspiration. Amid the convulsions of

kingdoms, that book, like the ark, that held the hope of the world, riding in safety on the tempest waves, has been preserved. Like the lamp in the fable that burned on, age after age, unfed, the light of God's word has been the same. Like the magic tent, that could be folded to a lady's fan, and yet could be spread to cover a gathered host, it has blessed the individual and communities. And while thousands of books, that would take man's reverence from the Scriptures, have perished, that book remains the same—the same to instruct, to strengthen, to guide, to support, and to control. In many a broken heart, where human craft and infidelity had been too strong for the recuperative energy of the affections, its holy light, like a lamp in a sepulchre, has burned, and shed over the melancholy ruin the rays of hope. "The entrance of thy word giveth light," says the Psalmist; and in its progress to reach every affection and feeling, every passion and desire, it "shineth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day." And when "the whole body is full of light," then there is no nook or corner for the form of superstition, and every

imagination that rises there shall be a child of beauty and a creature of joy. How beautiful are the departed in that light! They stand as angels amid the stars, and the immortal flowers of their crowns flash with the glittering rays that are poured upon them.

I have just returned from an infant's burial. As I entered the home of sorrow, and saw the gathered weepers, my eye caught sight of the Bible laid on the little coffin. I have seen such a sight many times, and it always deeply affects me. I wish I could find language for the emotions it awakens, for that union of mortality and immortality is the very poetry of silence and yet of religion. How silent are both the infant's face and the book! To gaze on the one prepares us to read and to feel the unspeakable worth of the other. And when the heart bleeds at every pore as the bereaved stands by the side of the beautiful, but vanishing dead,—when startling questionings and perplexing mysteries deepen and widen the cloud of gloom, there is the volume that can alone speak peace to the troubled elements. "Thy words were found

and I did eat them," explains the source of new energy, and of a higher, because more spiritual, life; for "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Yes, for if death bears away the bright blossom of existence, or the sweet bud of being, that book gives them to us again. Its voice is like the voice of Jesus—the dead hear it and come forth. They will tarry with us when no longer we can place the Bible on their coffin, if we buried that word in our hearts when we committed the precious body to the grave. Then, in the loneliness of the chamber, where, united with many things, are the memories of our beloved, meditation shall call up the form and face so dear, and to us so beautiful, the word of God shall rise too; the angel of "the everlasting covenant, in all things well ordered and sure," will stand by our child, and for every word of regret or of lamentation which is forced from the weakness of our hearts, that angel shall speak many of comfort and strength. If memory is busy to array before us the past, if the touching and sweet images that made the



day so pleasant, and gave beauty to the night, come to us as flowers that bloomed too briefly, and we weep, weeping the more bitterly because our tears are in vain,—then shall the spirit of that book bring to our vision the future, and we shall not say of it that it is all mysterious and so distant! It will be brought near, and be made plain in as far as our actual necessities require; and through all the passages of mortal life, at every pause when we think of God, our fervent tribute shall be, "In the multitude of thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul." Yes, *delight* the soul! going beyond the simply imparting of serenity and hope, and adding thereto a vivacity such as belongs to the spring-time, so that not only shall come the times when affliction shall so be felt that all we can do is to "pray," but also times of true cheerfulness when we shall be impelled to "sing psalms."

The word of God is, then, the true and the best mourner's book. To that we can repair when the perishing hopes of earth teach us that "all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass; the grass with-

ereth, and the flower thereof falleth away;" and therein communing with eternal things, we shall find the after life of the flower of humanity, and the glory that shall be given to man more enduring than the stars, and our rejoicing shall be that "the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

The poorest and the humblest need not be without comfort. God's word is free to them, aye, it is more free than to those who by the vanities of wealth and state have fostered prejudices of the intellect and feelings which unfit them for right study of the holy Scriptures. But sickness and bereavement make us all poor, so far as outward prosperity is concerned; for it is not wealth and pageantry that then can please us. By the side of our dead, the grandeur of state grows pale; the voice of fame has a hollow tone; human dignities seem mockeries; and the heart asks only for solitude and silence, or the voice of affection. We can have all these as we sit apart in our chamber—our closet of prayer, when the door is shut—and gaze on the open page of the Bible.

"My soul cleaveth unto the dust : quicken thou me according to thy word." The dust, while it retains the form through which the spirit of the beloved and precious shone, cannot but be cleaved unto. How fondly we have embraced it! How the embrace did thrill our souls with gladness! When a brief absence had kept from morn to night and night to morn the dear one from us, then did we cleave the stronger; and when a parting came that was to take them from us for a brief week, how long and lingering was then the embrace! And now that *the last* clasping of that dear form is come—now that the last kiss upon the cold lips is to be given, blame not the soul that cleaves with even awful tenacity to the dust. The heart becomes almost petrified with grief; the coldness and death of the dust seems to have pervaded our own frame, and we pray to be buried with our beautiful and dear! But there is a better prayer than that,—“Quicken thou me according to thy word!” “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” Let this quickening come, let the eyes of the soul be thus opened,

and then will we cleave to the immortal. In our Sacred Flora we shall indeed place the palm branch, and more deep and abiding shall our sentiment of reverence and gratitude be, than that of those who cried, as they waved the emblem of victory, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" Yes, blessed in the depths of our souls be Jesus! for it was he who first spoke of immortality with a clear voice, as the hand was laid on little children.



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**"LET THERE BE LIGHT."**

"Let there be light !" Jehovah said,  
And o'er the world the mandate sped ;  
Beauty and joy sprang forth and smiled,  
And music was the first-born child.

"Let there be light !" lo, from the soul  
The clouds of moral darkness roll !  
The new born powers a glory wear,  
And songs of gladness fill the air.

"Let there be light !" death is no more ;  
The reign of sin and hell is o'er ;  
A rainbow shines about the throne,  
Eternally the storm has flown.

"Let there be light !" on, on the soul  
Presses to open wisdom's scroll ;  
And age on age the spirit joys  
In bliss that never fails or cloys.

"Let there be light !" anoint mine eyes  
To gaze upon truth's radiant skies,  
That when the gates of heaven uncloze  
I may arise as Jesus rose.

## PRAYER.

Oh! when the heart is full, when bitter thoughts  
Come crowding thickly up for utterance,  
And the poor common words of courtesy  
Are such a very mockery, how much  
The bursting heart may pour itself in prayer!  
*Willis.*

THE mourner without prayer, is lameness without its staff, or Hagar in the desert unconscious of the well of water by her side. The branching tree of life is not seen, waving in beauty as though conscious of its virtues in sweetening the bitter waters. Prayer is the great medium of comfort, as it brings the sincere soul into direct communion with imperishable things, and brings the vision of the fashion of a world that does not pass away. The most glorious dreams and revelations of heaven; the most wonderful displays of divine truth for human guidance; and the greatest deeds of angel-like valor,

have succeeded prayer. It has lit up with heavenly light the darkest dungeon; it has made the tears shed on the galling chain turn to gems and the links of iron to gold, so that the emblem of degradation became an ornament; and wherever man has been in oppression, in poverty, and distress, remembrance of God in prayer has brought the sweetest solace and a divine repose. The world's history is full of testimonies to its might and glory—testimonies which must ever weigh far more with the heart that feels its spiritual necessities, than all possible subtleties of metaphysics and reasonings on prayer. But, above all, the example of Jesus—the way, the truth, and the life—pleads the inestimable worth of this spiritual exercise. "In him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," and yet he felt the need of prayer. All the possible communication of divinity, could not, while he took our nature, exempt him from the devotional necessities of man; and therefore we find that prayer was to him more than was the water of the well of Bethlehem to David. His thoughts were mighty men to reach it; they rushed through all

opposing circumstances, and when the blessing was brought, the strength of the waters of prayer was received and consecrated to God. The Master's life is full of evidences of the worth of prayer, and not idly was it recorded that when he came up from the baptism, he came up praying. In the strength of that prayer, he went forth to the wilderness, and there the full force of temptation was resisted. He exhorted to prayer; he had felt its power to invigorate, soothe, and bless; and he would guard his disciples against wrong modes of prayer, only that they might enjoy more the blessings of the true exercise.

There is in one of the records of our Lord's life, a train of incidents which exemplifies the power of prayer, as applied to the sorrowing and troubled. We may keep before us the human feelings of Jesus, because they are brought to view by his necessity to pray, his dependence for strength on the vibration of that chord in the soul that can only be moved by the breath of prayer. But to the incidents to which I have alluded.

Herod had consummated his cruelty to-



wards John the Baptist, and the Saviour hearing of the death of his forerunner and his burial, departed by means of shipping to a desert place. The people heard of this, and on foot journeyed to find him, from the cities, bearing their sick with them. Jesus came from his retreat, and "was moved with compassion towards them and healed their sick." Evening was approaching; he must teach no longer, and his disciples asked of him to send the multitude away to the villages that they might buy food. But he told them that the multitude need not depart. "Give them to eat," said he. But they knew not where food was to be gained in such a desert place, and they brought to him the little store which they possessed. He blessed it and brake, and all were fed—men, women and children. He then bade his disciples to go by ship before him to the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. When they all were gone, the shades of evening had fallen, and "he went up into a mountain apart to pray, and was there alone." While Jesus was in that mountain solitude, serene and peaceful, the disciples in the ship were

"tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary." When the fourth watch of the night was come, Jesus went down and trod upon the sea, to meet the distracted disciples mid the tempestuous waves. The light of his glorified countenance—the radiance of prayer—the illumination of rapt thought that made the face of Moses to shine so dazzlingly that the Jews begged it might be veiled as they gazed at him in the mount,—the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shot across the dark waters, like the beauty of the risen moon, and no wonder that the disciples were troubled, and cried out for fear, "It is a spirit!" Alas, for our sinful estate! the most glorious beauty startles as well as hideousness, and we cry out for fear where there is nothing to fear. But like a sweet voice from a watch-tower, blending with the beauteous light, Jesus spake to them, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid!" Soon the boisterous sea was calmed, and peace came upon the disciples.

Is not Jesus thus "made unto us" the way of prayer? How the toils and trials of day, the afflictions which rise from the death

of the beloved, prayer leads us to the place apart—to the mount of meditation—where the world is shut out, and heaven only is seen; there the soul recovers its energies, and when it goes down from that loftiness of thought, it can walk upon the waves of the sea, it can shed a light upon the troubled waters, it can speak good words to quiet fears, and it can bring calmness to the stormy elements. Prayer goes with us through the day, and upon the very hem of the garment of devotion there is a divine virtue to heal and bless.

The breath of prayer rises as sweetness to heaven. Not unmeaningly was the vision given to John of the angel with the golden censer, unto whom was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne; and the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. There are prayers that rise from hearts that seemed to be crushed, when the words can only find utterance like the oozing out of the virtues of the bruised herb,

and the prayer is bitterness indeed. Yet the angel of compassion stands near by the bowed soul, and blends the fragrance of the incense of mercy with the rising prayer, and thus it enters heaven. Peace falls upon the anguished spirit, for the music of harps steals down from the infinite profound, and the tempest of the soul dies away, as the face of Saul grew calm when the melody of David fell upon his spirit. How beautiful is that other vision given to John, where spirits had every one harps, and golden vials filled with odors, which were the prayers of saints! Heaven makes everything sweet that rises from a prayerful heart. The bitter speech of an agonized soul, that holds fast to its reverence for the rectitude of God, becomes fragrant odors in golden vials, when it rises to the courts of heaven. Mysteriously thus changed, it comes back to the soul, and lips that so late were praying, "Let this cup pass from me!" cease to quiver with anguish, and utter the pious language of submission, "Thy will be done!" The serenity that marks the after life of such spirits, is all explained by the prophet's words,—“They

poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them." "The prayer of faith" has saved the sick at heart, and out of the cool urns of the mountain heights of devotion, the soul has drank the waters of life. Prayer leads forth into the true atmosphere of the spirit, out of the close chamber of wearying melancholy. It enlarges the boundaries of thought, and gives better than the wings of a dove, that it may flee away and be at rest—at rest, not from duty and usefulness, but from the slavery of misanthropic and desponding musings. It leads it above the shades, and sublimely can it make an application to its own experience of what the aeronaut described in his flight: "At last, a thick bar of vapor being past, what a scene was disclosed! A storm was sweeping through the sky, nearly a mile beneath, and I looked down upon *an ocean of rainbows*, rolling in indescribable grandeur, to the music of the thunder-peal as it moaned afar and near, on the coming and dying wind." When we get *beneath* such clouds again, they seem less dark from the remembrance of the beauty to be seen above them.

On all other days but the Sabbath, the primitive Christians knelt when they prayed ; on that day, they stood upright, as emblematical of the great fact of the resurrection of Jesus. As they thus stood, they extended their arms to the utmost, thus forming a resemblance to the cross on which Jesus expired. These customs were earnestly commended to the disciples to be followed, because they blended the ideas of the death and the resurrection of Jesus, and kept those facts before the mind when engaging in communion with the Great Parent Spirit. The mourner needs the inspiration of the same associations to be with him, that he may not "restrain prayer." The dying poet who exclaimed, "Give me a great thought, that I may refresh myself!" uttered an idea that is worthy of being constantly remembered ; for like the influence of the atmosphere of a fountain to the travel-worn pilgrim, or the bracing mountain air and prospect to him who ascended the lofty mountain, is the refreshment of great thoughts to the soul. Prayer brings us into the heaven of thought ; we enter into the presence of the loftiest

goodness ; we commune with the spirit of all life, and new energy enters our souls. Wherever there dwells a mourner, who "restraineth prayer before God," there is weakness indeed. The prime means of "renewing the mind," is set aside, and the strengthening angel comes not to the Gethsemane in which they are bowed. When the Psalmist felt the bitterness of his adversaries, and mourned that his love was not returned, he said, "But I give myself unto prayer." It was well that he did ; the best affections were thus kept alive, while his outward circumstances were of such a caste as to torture into violent action the baser passions. And in a milder sense, when our affections are not returned by visible tokens from the beloved whom death has taken from us, let us not yield in despair, nor go mourning over desolateness, but give ourselves to prayer. Let it be the outgushing of feeling, as when a child comes to its parent with its whole heart open, and pours out its griefs at once.

The way of prayer is always open, and he that humbly seeks wisdom, is assured that

he shall not meet an upbraiding God. Man is not always easy of access to man, and when he is reached by one who has received great favors, but who has sadly misused or neglected them, he is apt to speak upbraiding words, and if another favor is granted, it is wrung from him. Not so with the Deity. He is not an oriental monarch, hard of access; neither is he a harsh creditor; and, therefore, for our comfort it is written, "If any man lack wisdom"—if he realizes deeply and truly his lack—"let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." Not scanty supplies shall come, but the gift shall be liberal. It shall be now, when the duties of devotion are attended to, as in olden time, a blessing shall come so great that there shall not be room enough to receive it; and were it not for the expansibility of the soul, there would be a waste. To such a God, "the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort," we may well come. To keep afar from him—to enter not the holy paths of prayer, is to stray mid tangled weeds and piercing thorns, where no fountain throws up



its waters into the sunshine, and the tree of life does not grow.

Lie not down on a prayerless bed. Re-count the mercies still spared, and see how holy thoughts will strengthen the memory to recall long forgotten blessings. Prayer will bring serenity to the spirit, as it breathes the calmness of heaven upon the troubled thoughts that night gathers in the audience chamber of the soul, and when sleep comes, it will bring rest and refreshment. O ever the departed would so speak to us if they could, as that we might have the loving word of her who said to the weeper ere she died,—

“Remembering me, remember God.”



## AN INVOCATION.

**STRIKE**, strike the harp chords, for my soul is faint !  
To silent nature I have breathed my plaint ;  
The solemn stars no milder glow, and the chill air  
Plays with unpliant fingers mid my hair,  
And on my brow how cold the dew-drops lie,  
I must not, cannot, in such stillness die.

Strike, strike the harp ! ye minstrels of the skies,  
And tell a drooping spirit how to rise,  
To break the bonds that bind so firm to death,  
And breathe high anthems with immortal breath,  
With hopes to cheer the shadowy vale that leads  
Where the crushed heart no more in terror bleeds.

O silent all ! come, spirits of the dead,  
Come teach the lesson of the dying bed,  
Come with those smiles that made the noon-day pale,  
Come with the voice whose charm did never fail,  
Come with the glance that reached the inmost soul,  
Come, and my terrors and my tears control !

O Alleluia ! see the opening skies !  
Too bright the radiance—I must veil mine eyes.  
Hark ! what soft music fills the slumbering air,  
Where are the minstrels, tell me, tell me where ?  
I'll ask no more—the song hath soothed my heart,  
Heaven reunites what death on earth must part.

## VISIONS AND DREAMS.

"Come but for one brief hour,  
Sweet dreams ! and yet again,  
O'er burning thought and memory shower  
Your soft effacing rain !"

*Mrs. Hemans.*

POETRY has set apart the Aloe as the symbol of imagination, because "it is said to thrive best in the desert, deriving its support almost entirely from the air, and assuming very singular and fantastic shapes." It should be consecrated to dreams, for they fill the desert with beauty ; and with but a very slender fibre in the earth, they rise to gorgeous plants garnished with loveliness, and veiling ruins with enchanted flowers. Some of our dreams remind us of the sharp and bitter taste of the Aloe, but that should not keep us from the enjoyment of whatever of transcendent beauty is given us. Such beauty is given ; and grateful souls have trained their powers of imagination, so that night, by its dreams, has given them a more

blessed life than the day. The severed ties of home, are all united again, and not a jewel is gone from the golden ring. A world is brought around us where want and pain are unknown, and where every inhabitant, walking in the light of immortal youth, is glorious to behold. Though it may be said that all this is unreal, yet it would be well to ask whether, in truth, it were less real than the world of dark fantasy which so many weepers draw around them. We little realize "what shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue;" and how "man walketh in a vain show." Did we heed this more, we might be more willing to let light dawn thereupon, though it were the light of the imagination. "The happy paintings even of a dream," says some one, "bring joy; until their rainbow hues melt away;" and shall we refuse to enjoy the rainbow because it is transient? O, what form of beauty is permanent! Where can we see loveliness that is not like the wave whose form is most beautiful the very moment of its death? We sometimes call the bud lovelier than the flower, but is it not because we do not know

what the flower may be, and are conscious that, bloom as it will, decay will immediately come? Indeed, it were grossly unwise to set aside our improvement of the permission to enter the realms of the imagination, because we think that nothing is permanent there. But more permanency is there than we can give to much of the visible. It is so with the precious loves that death has taken from our sight; they are no more in our homes, and though we wander everywhere, we cannot meet them again. But in the realm of the imagination they abide. We see them still, and we cannot turn away from their beauty till the sounds of the waking world bring us back to the harsh realities of the senses.

Dreams have been made a grand instrument to bless the world, when in olden time God spake through visions. We have passed to an age when a life—the life of Jesus—has been made the all-sufficient and ever-unfolding revelation. Yet the faculty of the imagination is still useful; dreams are not to be discarded; and yet they are not to be considered as prophetic. I will not say that dreams

never are prophetic, because in the profound meditations of mind, when all the gates of the senses are closed, and nothing comes to disturb, the spirit may arrive at conclusions inevitably just, and a forecast be given which in wakeful hours might have been bestowed, had not the world of sense distracted the operations of mind. "The testimony of Jesus," says John, "is the spirit of prophecy;" and may not that testimony, written on the soul, give a beauty to dreams such as can only be lent by the eternal glory of imperishable things? The profound serenity that has mysteriously passed upon the spirit during the hours of sleep, reaching beyond the balmy powers of repose stilling and quieting the feverish and agitated nerves, seems to indicate this. Many a mother has felt this, when a heavenly vision came to her, too bright for any colors this side of immortal beauty, and when to throw it from her, as "only a dream," were to her a profanation—were to be "disobedient," and to cast aside the beauty of life. Paul tells us of visions of heaven for which he could find no language. These were not then for any

other but himself, and that these brought him peace is evident from the change wrought upon his mind; before they came, he had thrice prayed that a grievous burden might be lifted from him, but after they were given, he could "take pleasure in infirmities" and "glory" in them, "that the power of Christ might rest upon him." It may be so with us. The ten thousand associations that cling to the objects of sense, confuse us ofttime, but when sleep passes on sight and hearing, the sublimating power of our faith manifests itself, and when we rise from the couch of repose, we know that we have been near a fountain, because our souls are refreshed. We have this consciousness, and not being a matter of reasoning and argument, it is "unlawful" for us to attempt to convey the visions to others. Let them see the better patience with which we endure our sorrows, and the more cheerful light of hope beaming on the countenance; these shall speak, as the presence of the Aloe in the desert tells that some power of beauty has been there.

There is one dream recorded in the Bible that may still speak to us consoling truths as

we give play to imagination and muse upon it. I allude to Jacob's dream, when he beheld a ladder set up from the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and, behold, the angels of God ascended and descended on it. Above it was a manifestation of the presence of the Lord God.

And first, of the *time* when this vision was given. It was given after Jacob had violated the most sacred humanities of life, and by subtlety deprived his brother of his birth-right blessing. The attending circumstances proved him to be base, and one over whom a dark cloud of fearfulness might well hang. He was a grievous sinner, yet God gave him visions of heaven; he gave them to renew the covenant made to "the father of multitudes" and to Isaac, that through the unchangeableness of the divine love he might be led to a higher and purer love than he had ever yet known. And of what does this speak to the sorrowing soul? It warns against indulging the imagination, that the sins of the past shroud God's mercy, and that to the sinner can come no heavenly visions. Nay, despond not thus, for what was the



character of Saul, as well as that of Jacob, when "heavenly visions" were granted to him? Hate against the innocent burned fiercely, and deadly wrath was arrested by light from above. And so in our dark estate, when the memories of sin committed gather around the soul and fearfulness possesses every feeling, the mystic ladder is erected, and heaven is opened; precious words are spoken, and bright spirits go to and fro to bear our thoughts to celestial urns and bring them back baptized in holiness. Yes, God would win us from all sin, that we might need no ladder whereby to rise to celestial beauty, but have about us the spiritual charm that

"Fresh life to living eyes its vital presence gives."

"Set your affection on things above," is the great instruction of highest wisdom; but it will not be obeyed unless the superior attraction of those things be felt. The affections are not voluntary; they lean as the magnet draws; and that the magnet may reach the steel of the heart, it must first impart of its own properties and overcome

the medium that separates. For this purpose, to sinful Jacobs the vision of the mystic ladder is given; and God, in veiled glory, appears, to draw the soul to himself by a yearning chain.

But wherefore was the mystic ladder, set up on the earth, reaching unto the clouds, rather than let down from the heavens? Because from right thoughts of earthly things, we rise to just conceptions of the heavenly. Many never think rightly of heaven, because they never have worthy views of earth. They do not make life a unity; they do not here recognize one mansion of God's love, and when we speak to them of the sacred truth, "The earth is full of the riches of God," they turn away and mourn as though it were "a vale of tears." With a deep meaning, we may use holy words and say, "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" From the near we rise to the remote; thought on thought, the rounds of the ladder are made, and when at last its height must be veiled by clouds, we can rejoice that they are

clouds' where Jehovah dwells. True piety does not slight the smallest gifts of God, but led on by these tokens of grace, it rises till it enters heaven, and then returns to think yet more wisely of earth.

"We need not bid, for cloistered cell,  
Our neighbor and our work farewell,  
Nor strive to wind ourselves too high  
For sinful man beneath the sky:  
The trivial round, the common task,  
Would furnish all we ought to ask;  
Room to deny ourselves—a road  
To bring us, daily, nearer God."

And does not this possibility of erecting the mystic ladder, speak to us of the union of earth and heaven? The golden band that bound, at the birth of man, the earth to heaven, has never been broken. Man's sins have made it vibrate with intensity, and at times angels might almost have feared that never again would the stars sing together for joy, as they thought they beheld the harp of harmony all shattered and unstrung. But no! the earth is still under the smile of humanity's Father, and as we muse on his love, the minuteness of his providence, the exceeding grace whereby "our life is hid

with Christ in God," and "we are complete in him," lo! the ladder rises! angels ascend, bearing our tributes of gratitude, our aspirations and our prayers, and they descend bearing to us new favors, new tokens of our Father's interest in our happiness and virtue. When the dear and precious in our households are yielding to the power of death, the heart may be busy building the mystic ladder while fear sleeps; and when the work is finished, by death and faith, we can follow the ascending spirit and look in upon the life of the immortals, and with the sweet sanctity of the sight resting upon our whole being, we can return to the earth, to go about our daily tasks, rejoicing in the peace that has passed upon the beloved. When the quiet evening comes and the sad voids left by their absence are felt, and tears will flow, we can build up again the ascension aid, and enter into communion with that which lives above the clime of mortal things. And then

"We speak of those so lately gone,  
And words of sorrow dry our tears;  
And even when the tear flows on,  
It each to each the more endears."

It is no marvel that the ground seemed holy when the heavenly dream came to the Patriarch and he arose with its beauty resting on his soul. When he came to the spot, it was but a hard resting place for the night, but when he left it was to him "the gate of heaven." Such is the power of thought into which the unction of holiness has been breathed. When only images of vanished joy, wrecks and ruins of past hopes and aspirations, are seen, a freshness like that which Spring gives to the earth may come, and sadness shall be but as the shadow of the green leaves on the rose. From the gates of heaven there opened, the light of glory shall stream, and Faith shall walk in cheerfulness where Sight only sighed and wept. We shall accept whatever of beauty the night gives which day denies, and though the light steals from us the vision of stars, yet the sweet impression made by their visit shall not so easily be taken from us.

"My soul is like the flower that blooms by night,  
And droops by day;  
Yet may its fruit expand, though in the light  
Night-blossoms droop away.

"The vision thus in dreamy stillness cherished,  
Like dreams may fly ;  
But day's great acts, o'er thoughts that nightly perished,  
May ripen, not to die."

In the hushed stillness of night, I cannot but delight to indulge memory, as, when aided by fancy, she brings the departed near. I go from home to home, and see the precious child as once she was ; and when the bitter thought that she can really be with us here no more is felt, I turn to pray—to revolve in my mind the hopes and promises of the gospel, and when sleep comes, I am borne to the land of dreams. I wake with a peace upon my spirit that only heaven can impart. Let me dream on. It will soon be reality.

"Her memory is the shrine  
Of pleasant thoughts, soft as the scent of flowers,  
Calm as on windless eve the sun's decline,  
Sweet as the song of birds among the bowers,  
Rich as the rainbow with its hues of light,  
Pure as the moonshine of an autumn night."



## HEARTS BEAT TRUE IN HEAVEN.

I've had a vision, beautiful and bright !  
A smiling angel, robed in softest light,  
Familiar came beside my study chair,  
And laid her hand upon my moistened hair ;  
A coolness came upon my fevered brow,  
Like the cool breath of some sweet fountain's flow.

Hushed was my being ; not a pulse beat wild  
Beneath the magic of a look so mild ;  
She kissed my lip, my quivering heart became  
A wild, delirious, all-pervading flame !  
An instant more, and all was calm again,  
As on her breast my drooping head was lain.

I heard the beating of a loving heart !  
No terrors, from that breast my frame could start ;  
I gazed upon the eyes that looked on me,  
And sunk into the sleep of mystery.  
When I awoke, the angel guest was gone,  
But still I heard that beating heart's low tone.

I pondered, " Wherefore was this vision given ? "  
A spirit answered, " Hearts beat true in heaven ! "



## THE CHARMED FLOWERS.

Hail to thee, holy herb !  
Growing on the ground,  
In the mount Calvary,  
First wert thou found ;  
Thou art good for many a sore,  
Thou healest many a wound ;  
In the name of sweet Jesus,  
I take thee from the ground.  
*Ancient Charm Verse.*

**SUPERSTITION**, or exaggerated faith, has never appeared more beautiful than in connection with some floral rites and ceremonies. Flowers are as spiritual as the winds ; they appear as mysteriously, where no sign or token of the hand of culture is seen, and they cannot but lead to the invisible and divine, as when, like the Russian violet, they spring up from the frozen ground, amid wintry desolation and storms. They are continually woven into the prophecies of future good by the inspired seers of old ; and as they speak of the cedar as the image of strength, so do



they turn to the lily as the emblem of grace and delicacy. Thus they unite the "strength and beauty" of which the Psalmist sang, as being "found in the sanctuary." Religion earnestly enjoins upon us the cultivation of that which is tender as well as that which is strong; and, therefore, if in the stateliness of the oak, which has made even storms and tempests contribute to its majesty and strength, we read a lesson of the glory of mighty endurance, of how lofty attributes of moral character are developed by a right temper in using circumstances of awful trial,—so also should we learn as wise lessons from the violet at the foot of that same oak, or from the delicate forms of beauty which spring up in the wild. If we do not heed the charm of the flowers, but become absorbed in admiration of strength and endurance in the forest, our character will partake too much of Stoical sternness, and too little of Christ-like submission. The tender charities of life will not be heeded, as they were by our Saviour, and the delicate lessons of affectionate sympathy taught by his character, will be unperceived. The flowers are all charmed

to the Christian. They breathe balm, as the beauty of infancy revives the languid heart of age; and surely those forms of loveliness for which children will yield their costliest toys, may well be perpetual types of them, to steal away our sadness when the desolation of home is felt.

Among the customs which we may attribute to exaggerated faith, is that where certain flowers were plucked as possessing peculiar virtues, when culled in the name of Jesus. They were holy herbs, they were charmed flowers, and as the blossom smiled, it bore the believing soul back to Calvary. There, amid the horrors of man's consummate sin, and the glory of Christ's exceeding love, it first bloomed. It arose to greet the drooping eye of Jesus, as amid the gathering darkness above, when his gaze was lifted up, the beautiful stars spake of the presence of heavenly loveliness amid the terrors of the scene. A flower that could bear the soul to that spot where the sublimity of enduring love was seen, was indeed a charmed flower. It must have brought a blessing to the wrapt soul. It must have healed many a wound.

It must have made many a pain depart. It must have caused the evils which sorely tried every virtue, appear but trifling in comparison with the agonies which innocence there endured. Yes, from Calvary come the holy flowers of faith. As we look on the love there speaking and acting amid all that can stifle and suppress its tenderness, we cannot but look further than death for the end. We enter the garden of the resurrection, and there we pluck, with new virtues in them, the charmed flowers of Calvary. They are fairer to us than to the heathen were those which they deemed sacred because the rainbow seemed to rest on them, leaving the impress of its smile. The flower that speaks of the resurrection smile of Jesus, is the loveliest that springs from earth to look towards heaven. It has a sacred charm. And should not every flower that gems the grave of a child, be such to the Christian parent? It should; and when it shall be so with Christians, more cheerful shall we aim to make "the city of the dead," the burial place where the bereaved heart makes its pilgrimage, feeling too much the grief with which her

steps were first turned thither, and too little of the sublime hopes symbolized by the cheerful faith that added to the memorial column broken at the top—emblem of interrupted growth and beauty—the wreath of roses, that spake of loveliness yet to be revealed. It was a *garden* in which Jesus was buried; and let us, at least, bury our dead in the garden of hope, in which we may cultivate the flowers of paradise, and have around us the music of the celestials.

“ Oh, let us live, so that flower by flower  
Shutting in turn may leave  
A lingerer still for the sunset hour,  
A charm for the shaded eve.”

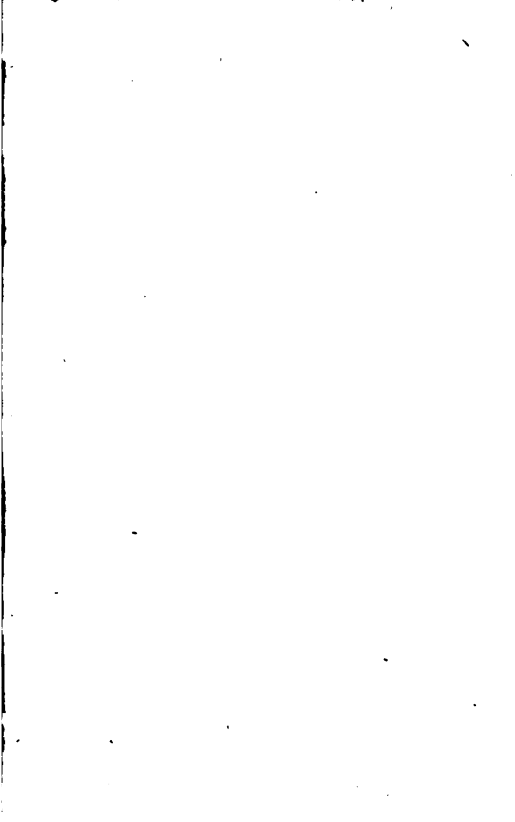
Yes, and farther on than “the shaded eve,” may we charm the hours by the sweet presence of spiritual floral beauty; for many *night-blooming* flowers spring around the child's grave, not like the *Cereus*, to fade at early morning, but to be borne with us through the day of life, and lay upon our heart in death, imaging the beauty of heaven, and recalling the entrancing music that blended with the breath of fragrance.

I have lately been at a grave where the cold stone presents the sculptured prayer, that the visiter will kindly pluck whatever weeds may spring up there to choke the growth of the flowers; the reward promised, is to come from the songs of the birds who may be invited to the spot by its beauty and sweetness. I cannot close this humble Flora better, than by asking the reader to heed the moral of this request, permitting no moral weeds to choke the flowers that should and will grow around a child's grave. Let not neglect of the dead lessen the beauty that was once given to the sacred spot, and sweet music shall reward the love expended. The ear of faith shall listen to angel melodies, and from grief shall all its bitterness be taken away.

“By what strange spell

Is it, that when I gaze on flowers  
I dream of music? Something in their hues,  
All melting into colored harmonies,  
Wafts a swift thought of interwoven chords,  
Of blended singing-tones, that swell and die,  
In tenderest falls away. *O bring thy harp.*”







THE BORROWER  
AN OVERDUE FEE  
NOT RETURNED TO  
OR BEFORE THE LA  
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BORROWER FROM

Harvard College  
Cambridge, MA 021

~~WIDENER~~  
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